



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

# THIS BOOK

*Belongs to Rowley's*  
**CIRCULATING LIBRARY,**  
**EDMONTON.**

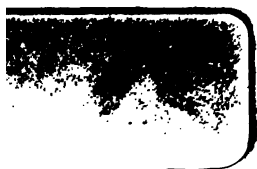
For the accumulation of Sundry other plates  
to return this amount is made.

S. B. Particular Notice is taken of the Book  
when sent out, and when they are returned  
the Library Volume is put in its place, or the  
Volume is returned to the Library, or the  
Book is sent to the Binder, that it may be  
bound in its proper place, and the Book is put  
back in its proper place.

*Book Binding in all its Branches,*  
*Stationary,*  
*Fancy Goods and Paper, &c. &c.*



600078075X



by J. Darling, London 1888.



# THERESA.

---

A ROMANCE.

---

Printed by J. Darling, Leadenhall-Street, London.

---



---

# THERESA.



## CHAP. I.

There is a sort of gloomy light in this,  
That flashes horror on me—a black swarm  
Of fell ideas seize my fancy.                      THOMSON.

**T**HE soul of the exile was filled with contrition and tenderness, arising from the belief that the spirit of her whom he had deprived of innocence, and happiness, and life, unable to shake off its dearest earthly habit, still hovered around him, averting every maligner influence. He felt no disposition to sleep; and it was an employment congenial to his present mood to pace the floor on which she had bounded in the wild and artless gaiety of childhood—to trace her genius in the lines of her pencil, and



her housewifely industry in the neat-wrought hangings of the bed in which he was to repose.

Among the drawings executed in mature life, he observed that one, the subject of which was the Parting of Hector and Andromache, was spotted in several places, as if tears had fallen on it from the eyes of the artist. On examining it closer, he thought the two principal figures were portraits of Luise and himself; and on taking it from the wainscot for closer inspection, he discovered on a piece of paper pasted on the back of the frame, a translation which he had made extempore of the passage, at the commencement of their acquaintance.

On the shelf that hung by the picture, he found an old pocketbook, which contained several other scraps he had translated for her, a profile sketch of his own countenance, and a worn-out silk purse, which he recollected having thrown away in Meister's garden, carefully wrapt up in a square piece of embroidered satin.

In a transport of grief he pressed this evidence of her love to his lips, and imprinted on it a thousand kisses; but his feelings were wound up to a pitch of intolerable agony, when, as he opened a small book that lay next the pocketbook, he found it to be a volume of Petrarch, which he had put into her hands, in the hope that the soul-melting strains of that divine poet would facilitate the designs he had formed against her honour, from the first moment of their acquaintance. Alas! they had been but too successful.

Overpowered by his emotions, he threw himself on the bed, pressed his face to the pillow, and wept.

While he lay indulging the feelings which tears soon despoiled of some portion of their bitterness, he thought he heard a door gently unbarred. He thought every one in the house had been in bed, and consequently was rather startled by the circumstance. A low footfall presently passed his door, and descended the staircase. He

thought it might be the landlady going down for something she had forgotten when she retired to her bedchamber, which he had heard her do a little before, in company with Jacob; yet it rather surprised him that she should have so soon overcome the apprehensions inspired by the aerial music.

He had just concluded that these had been overcome by the authority of the invalid, when he heard the outer door of the house slowly and cautiously unbarred; and immediately springing to the window, he perceived, for it was now clear moonlight, a muffled figure issue from the porch, and cross the lawn.

Alarmed lest he might have been traced by the cardinal's emissaries, and thinking it not impossible that to those rather than the new innkeeper of Blumenstadt might be attributed the destruction of the bridge, he determined to watch closely the motions of the individual, whoever he might be. Accordingly, drawing the curtain so as to enable him to see whatever might

pass without, while it concealed himself, he awaited, in breathless expectation, the result.

The figure crossed the lawn towards a plantation of laburnums, lilacs, and other shrubs, round which a broad gravel walk wound, and, as he conjectured, entered the wood beyond.

As he fastened his eye upon the angle of this shrubbery, he thought he perceived a plumed hat projected, and then withdrawn, from the shade of its utmost point; and ere he could recover from the consternation occasioned by this circumstance, which seemed to verify his conjectures, two men, in the dress of soldiers, emerged from the shade, and advanced to meet the person whose egress from the house had first alarmed him. When they met, a close conference seemed to ensue, conducted with much vehemence, as the exile could learn from the gesticulations of the parties; and that he was the subject of it, he could have little doubt, for the person who had

left the house pointed frequently to the window of his apartment.

All three, after a little time, bent their steps towards the house; and he now, conceiving that no attempt at escape could be attended with success, once more arming himself with his sabre, determined not to fall alive, if possible, into the hands of his enemies.

When he returned to the window, the men were close to the house, had stopped, and were still, as he could perceive from their gestures, conversing, though in a very low voice. Desirous of hearing what they were saying, he, as gently as he was able, opened the casement as much as would admit sound, without its appearing open to those below.

Notwithstanding all his caution, however, its creaking was heard, and one of the men started, looked up, and said—"If I am not mistaken, our man is not quite so secure as we thought him; did you not hear his casement creak?"

The others looked up also. Edward endeavoured to hold the casement steady, but it again creaked slightly.

"The house is old," said the man in the cloak; "the casements are all loose in their frames, and they shiver and creak with the slightest gust of wind. Depend upon it he is fast asleep. I heard him complain to the old woman of being much fatigued; and before I came out, I heard him breathing heavy, like one that sleeps sound."

Edward recollected that he had given vent to his feelings by sobs, before the step passed his door.; and as they were half repressed by the pressure of his face to the pillow, supposed that they had been mistaken by the man for heavy breathing.

"I think," said the person whom he had first heard, "you are wrong not to let us seize him now, while he is incapable of defending himself. If we wait till the time you propose, rest assured we shall find no easy job of it; many as we are to one, I have seen myself, at Gunegate, what that one is capable of."

"Pooh!" replied the other, "he'll never be mad enough to think of resistance—that would, of necessity, be fruitless, and which, moreover, would cut off completely any hopes of pardon he may cherish, though indeed I believe he cherishes any hope in vain. As to the danger of his escaping that you were insisting on, when you thought you heard the casement creak, that is out of the question. There is but one road from this by which he can go, since the bridge is broken down; and on that, from the point where we are to issue from the wood, to that where Conrad is stationed with his half dozen boors, there is no possibility of his turning to the right or left—on the one side there is a close hedge of thorn and holly, and on the other a steep precipice. I am more than ever satisfied with my plan, since from snatches of his conversation with the old woman, which I happened to hear, I discovered that he is some relation of hers; how that came about, indeed, I know not, unless his father, when on his travels, had her for a tempo-

rary wife, according to his usual fashion ; but so the fact is ; and you may rest assured, that as soon as she learnt his capture, she would arm her servants, and every peasant in the neighbourhood, for his rescue. I shall meet you," continued the man, "at the hut in the wood, by the first light ; and we must take our station pretty early, to guard against the danger of his anticipating us ; but I should think that between the hours of nine and eleven in the forenoon we shall have our man secured. After all, Conrad has performed his part well, if his advice misled us in the first instance. His sagacity in foreseeing that his lordship would stop here, provided the bridge were broken, has made up for it. Remember the hut in the wood—be punctual—we shall have a fine day for our enterprize—see how the lights flash from the north ! farewell for the present."

As he said these words, the man entered the porch, and Edward soon heard him ascend the stairs, and retire to his apart-



ment with the same caution he had descended; while his associates again crossed the lawn, and entered the wood.

The exile, released from all apprehension of an immediate attack, had now time to consider by what means he should escape the snare that was set for him, and to the knowledge of which he had been so providentially brought.

He sat down again by the side of the bed, and after a few minutes meditation, determined to watch all night, and as soon as he should hear his enemy leave the house in the morning, to swim his horse across the river, make the best of his way towards Switzerland, and cross that country in his way to France. When once within its frontier, amidst the honest sons of freedom and simplicity, he would be secure of an asylum which the satellites of no despot would presume to violate.

Just as he had resolved upon this mode of proceeding, and was about to withdraw his lamp from behind a screen, where he had placed it when first alarmed, the papers

which had fallen from the press, and which had been placed by the old woman on the toilet-table, in, as it appeared, an ill-constructed heap, fell to the ground. He set himself to work to replace them. They appeared, as he slightly and mechanically examined them, without suspecting that they contained any thing in the least interesting to him, to consist chiefly of letters of business, addressed to Meister, and copies of his answers. But two packages, somewhat larger than the rest, and which were addressed to count Steinberg, having caught his attention, he opened one of them, for they were not sealed, and found that it was written in cipher. Struck by this circumstance, he opened the other, and found that it contained, together with other papers, a key to the manuscript contained in the first; having studied this for a few minutes, he applied it to what appeared a title, and was equally astonished and pleased to find that this title was "*The Life of Robert Wagner.*"

Almost forgetting the critical circum-

stances in which he was placed, he trimmed his lamp with eager curiosity; and having settled himself at the table, began with eager industry to decipher the manuscript.

There was a short paragraph that seemed to be prefixed as an introduction; this he deciphered without much difficulty; it ran thus:—

“The task is at length completed, that is to gratify thy long-expressed wish. In judging of the extraordinary occurrences that are now laid before thee, judge not with those prejudices and feelings thou wouldst be actuated by in judging of ordinary men. He in whose favour exemptions have been made by powers higher than man, may well claim exemption from that reptile; for even in my eyes, who still in some degree partake of his bounded nature, he is no more than a reptile.”

With curiosity, augmented by such an exordium, Edward went on; as he proceeded, the interest he expected would be excited went a hundred-fold beyond any

thing he had conjectured; wrapt in the wonders he was reading of, the danger that threatened him entirely escaped his recollection.

Amazement, horror, rivetted his soul to the page; at length a passage rather difficult to be deciphered occurring, it forced him to pause in his task; he fetched his breath, which had been almost suspended by the intensity of his labour; his imagination labouring, under the impression created by the scenes by which his mind had been engaged; he felt a superstitious terror, from which he thought his intimate intercourse with the visionary world had freed him, creep through all his veins; he looked around, almost expecting to see some horrible and portentous shape: as he eyed his lamp, he thought it was waved by the breath of some invisible being.

He felt almost inclined to postpone the perusal of the manuscript, assured that his old landlady would not have the least objection to his carrying it with him; but then recollecting that he had resolved upon

watching all night, and not knowing how to employ his time, if he rejected the method that chance had thrown in his way, ashamed, too, of the depression of spirits that had begotten the reluctance under which he laboured, he resumed the paper—again its contents absorbed his faculties; but in a few minutes he was aroused from a depth of attention, almost amounting to stupor, by a vivid flash of lightning, that illumined the whole apartment with a light almost as bright as day, followed by a loud burst of thunder, that seemed immediately overhead.

Full of the subject he had been reading of, he was at first disposed to think that the concussion of the elements was a necessary consequence of its disclosure to the eye of man; and it was not till after the self-recollection of several minutes, that he wondered to find how deeply his ardent fancy had merged him in the vague and undefined terrors of superstition.

The tempest, the beginning of which had interrupted him, continued for near

an hour with unabated violence. The moon was now shrouded in a mantle of dense clouds, which, after the second or third flash of lightning, poured forth a deluge of rain.

The exile sat at the window, and enjoyed the terrors of the storm, for his soul was thirsty of sublime and awful objects. As the broad and sheeted flame spread with sudden expansion over the woods, tinging their summits with a fiery lustre, he could almost think that the forms of other worlds fitted in the glare; and while he expected, in pleasing suspense, the loud roar that seemed, when it came, as if it would shiver the dwelling that sheltered him, he loved to fancy that the low moanings of spirits that ride the night blast filled up the pause.

At length the clouds, attenuated by the torrents that had poured from them, admitted to the earth some portion of the soft light they had intercepted. The peals of thunder rolled, with multiplied echoes, amidst the distant hills, and at length died away, with faint and fainter intonation—

the heavy drops came, at longer intervals, from the eaves.

The exile opened his casement ; the cold wind that had blown in the evening had given place to a more genial air, mild but cool, refreshing and grateful to the sense, as it came impregnate with the scent of the sweetbriar, and that of some recently-mown hay that was scattered over the lawn.

The spirit of the exile was soothed and softened, and his thoughts turned to a softer subject than that by which they had been recently occupied ; he regretted the hard necessity that precluded him from the melancholy enjoyment he had projected for the morrow : as soon as he understood that he was amidst the haunts of poor Luise's infancy, he had wished to wander where she had often wandered, and thought of him—he wished to have heard her praises from the mouth of some humble cottager, whose drooping spirits her benevolence had cheered in the season of adversity—to sit beneath the tree where perhaps she

had carved his name—to view the prospects on which her eyes had rested when his image was in her heart—to hear the notes of that nightingale with whose vesper melody her song, inspired by faithful, unconquerable love, had contended for the palm of sweet and melting pathos. Alas! it was all denied him; his fierce and relentless pursuers were at his heels, and he must change his covert. His face flushed with indignation, as he thought of the unmerited persecution to which he was subjected.

“*O que la haine est douloureuse,*” says a French writer, “*et corrode le cœur qui la destitue.*” The exile felt it so, and willingly changed it for that pleasingly-awful sensation that a contemplation of things “passing the bounds of time and space” is capable of affording to the spirit that dares to scan, that dares to grasp them. He took up the mysterious and imposing manuscript; the cyphers were growing familiar to him, and he proceeded with greater ease; his astonishment and awe increased,



and so strong was the latter feeling, that it divided his attention between the wizard page and every sound that the storm had left behind it, the forest crash of branches half severed from their parent stock, and falling, yielding at last to their own weight, or the faint swell of the blast still struggling in the mountain tops.

Sometimes low voices seemed to murmur around him as he sat; he frequently raised his head, and anxiously listened; but all was still; at length a rustling noise, which he was convinced could not be fancy, caught his ear; he started, and turned suddenly round; the door of the apartment was ajar, and the curtains of the bed were violently shaken; he rose, and grasping his sabre with one hand, tore them open with the other.

The little dog that had belonged to Luise, frightened, as he supposed, by the thunder, had made his way up, and having, with his paw, pushed open the door, the lock of which, as he examined it, proved to be out of order, had made to his wonted

resting-place, and by scratching himself, had caused the rustling that disturbed him. As the little animal saw him, when he drew the curtains, with his sabre brandished in a menacing attitude, he threw himself on his back; and while the blandishment of his eye sued for mercy, the wagging of his tail seemed to indicate that he expected it.

Edward smiled to think how little can appal the load of earth, and patted the head of the creature, and said—"For worlds I would not harm thee!" and Fidele, rejoiced at his escape, yelped with glee, and wheeled about such circles as the dimensions of the bed afforded, and then put his paws up against his breast, and looked his thanks, and again wagged his tail.

The incident, trivial as it was, affected him to tears, for he thought of her whose property the dog had been; and it seemed as if she had infused into him her gentle, her confiding, her affectionate nature.

He closed the door, and once again resumed the manuscript; but he had not

read many minutes, when an allusion to a well-known name caught his eye—there was something of mystery coupled with the allusion, that had power to quell almost all interest, strong as was that he had felt in the wondrous tale he was reading, and force all his curiosity, if curiosity be not too weak a name for the sentiment that now actuated him, towards a passage, in which details were promised of the matter hinted at.

He eagerly turned the leaves of the manuscript, over and over again, in search of the passage; at length the name again struck his eye; he read, and, as he read, his hand shook, the colour forsook his cheeks, a mist seemed to swim before his eyes, and at length, overcome by the violence of his emotions, he fell senseless to the ground.

How long he remained in that situation he could not tell, but when he came to himself, he felt a strong inclination to sleep, which he attributed to the exhaustion of spirits he had undergone, as well

from the danger he had found himself in of falling into the hands of his enemies, when he had supposed them at so great a distance, as from the shocking import of certain information he had derived from the terrible document, on which, as it lay open on the table before him, he could not look without shuddering.

He tried, however, to read on, and was obtaining information he thought so important, that he wished much to continue the perusal, but the disposition to sleep was so strong, that he found himself obliged to lie down on the bed, which he did, without throwing off his clothes, hoping that the morning light, to which, by withdrawing the curtains, he gave free access, would awaken him in time sufficient to enable him to effect his escape.

The little dog crept close to him, and nestled in his bosom ; and he had just time to caress and encourage him, when he fell fast asleep.

When he awoke, he perceived, with great consternation, that the day was far

advanced ; and springing up, was about to precipitate his departure, when he suddenly recollected the manuscript, and was advancing to the table to secure it, having very little doubt that his hostess would make no difficulty of giving it him, when he perceived that it, and all the other papers amidst which he had found it, as well as the press that contained them, had been removed while he slept.

Apprehensive that, as the landlady had talked of destroying them, she might have taken them for that purpose, he rushed down stairs, to save, if possible, what he considered as a treasure above price ; but what was his grief and disappointment, when he found that his fears were but too well founded ! the old lady, after requiring to know why he had slept in his clothes, informing him that she was just going to take out, for his breakfast, a delicious cake of her own making, and for the baking of which she had heated the oven with the rubbish of papers that had fallen out of the press, which now stood in a corner of the

kitchen—"I was afraid," added she, after she had imparted this unwelcome information, "that I should have disturbed Mein Heer, in taking the lumber away; but I believe my fears were unnecessary, for you slept as sound, Heaven preserve us! as though you had been in your grave. Ah, Mein Heer, Mein Heer!" continued she, with a countenance expressive of infinite concern, "you'll be there but too soon; music, such as we heard last night, does not follow a person for nothing."

"It matters not how soon," said Edward; "but a web, red with blood, and dark with mystery, must be first unravelled, and thy precipitance has robbed me, for the present, of a knowledge of the means."

As he spoke, his look was stern and scowling, and that, together with the fearful import of his words, checked the loquacity of his hostess, who now prepared his meal in silence, while he went to give directions for his horse to be made ready.

## CHAP. II.

Fair was the scene around, an ample vale, -  
 Whose mountain circle, at the distant verge,  
 Lay soften'd on the sight; the near ascent  
 Rose bolder up, in part abrupt and bare,  
 Part with the ancient majesty of woods  
 Adorn'd, or lifting high its rocks sublime.

SOUTHEY.

.....

• For me, the hunted hart,  
 More fervent pants not for the cooling stream,  
 Than I to wrap me in the quiet shades  
 Of death.

THOMSON.

For one day the exile pursued his journey unmolested, his thoughts alternately turning to her whose memory chance had recently concurred with sorrow to fix in his mind, and to the mysterious manuscript, the perusal of a portion of which had filled his soul with horror.

But the dwelling in which he had passed

the night scarcely lay a mile behind him on the morning of the second day, when, as he wound into a valley, closed in on either hand by rocks and woods, he perceived, on the jutting brow of a precipice to the left, two men, the one on horse-back, and the other holding by the bridle a horse, from which he appeared to have dismounted.

They seemed to be engaged in earnest conversation, and frequently pointed in different directions. Edward stepped, just as they turned towards him, behind a point of rock that he conceived would screen him from their view, and perceiving, as he cast his eye forward, that the road ascended, and passed over an eminence thinly scattered with bushes, and almost immediately beneath where the men stood, he judged it not prudent to proceed; but turning his horse's head suddenly round, returned by the way he had come, till a road presented itself more to the left, into which he struck at a venture.



On this, however, he had proceeded but an inconsiderable distance, when he was met by a boor driving a cart, in which sat a woman, with whom as he conversed, he looked at Edward with much attention ; and after having passed him, suddenly stopped, and calling to him, said—" Mein Herr, I know not whether I am about to go between a malefactor and justice, or serve an innocent person ; but as it may be the latter, and you surely look like one that could not commit a bad action, I must tell you that we have just passed three men, well armed, who described just such a person as you, and desired to know if I had seen such an one? If you are a good man, Heaven protect you !" thus saying, he whipped his horse, and was out of sight before Edward had recovered sufficiently from the consternation into which the information had thrown him, to thank him for it.

He now deliberated with himself, whether, circumvented and pursued as he seemed to be, by indefatigable blood-hounds of

so true; a scent, it was worth his while to protect existence; and he had just resolved to ride forward, careless whether he might be assailed or not, when he remembered the manuscript; a deeper thought contracted his brow—"If the fates have willed it so," said he, "my pursuers cannot frustrate it. But again, if I wantonly throw myself in their way, do I not incur the guilt of attempting to subvert the decrees of Providence? No; never will I seek egress from life, till *that* task, at least, be accomplished."

As he spoke, he advanced towards a lane, the entrance of which he had observed at a small distance from where he had stopped, and clapping spurs to his horse, galloped through its windings for several miles ere he ventured to draw a rein.

He continued, for some days, to travel thus through bye-paths, seldom venturing to proceed any considerable distance on a more beaten track, and hoping that by inclining constantly to the right, he should

at length reach, he cared not at what point, the Swiss frontier.

He scarcely dared to inquire his road, having good reason to believe that he was still tracked by his persecutors; for besides that he had frequently a view from some close covert of horsemen scouring a heath, or climbing an eminence to explore the country, at one cottage where he stopped to refresh himself, he learned that a party of soldiers, who had talked of being in pursuit of some person, had slept there the night before, and in the morning had hired several boors to assist them in their search; and at another, into which he entered to avoid the heat of the mid-day sun, he observed a stripling, after having eyed him very attentively for some minutes, go out, as if to convey intelligence to some person of his being there—a circumstance which arousing fears, whether real or chimerical, induced him to precipitate his departure.

At length, having journeyed, without any ground for alarm, for the space of an

entire day, he began to think that he had distanced his pursuers. On that which succeeded it, having travelled at an easy pace the whole morning, still at a venture, for he had been afraid, even yet, to inquire his way at the cottage where he had slept and procured refreshment the preceding night, about noon he thought he could discern that the features of the country through which he was passing were assuming an Alpine cast, and joyfully hailed the circumstance, as affording evidence of his approach to Switzerland.

The road wound, with a gradual ascent, into the bosom of a mountainous and rocky tract, the wildness and loneliness of whose scenery increased as he advanced. Rude crags, in whose clefts, that told of some former convulsion of nature, a few surviving branches of the blasted oak still waved their scanty foliage, sometimes closed in his path, and towering on either side, gave to his view nought but the dark frown of their jutting brows, and the deep blue of heaven, across which the robber hawk

darted in pursuit of his prey. Now they receded, disclosing a more expanded, but not less savage scene ; rocks piled on rocks rose in chaotic confusion, their barrenness relieved only by a few scattered pines and firs, and affording no symptom, except the road that wound among them, that their dreary solitudes had ever been enlivened by the majestic form of creation's lord, or that their echoes had ever returned a sound less rude than that of the winds that rocked them, or the streams that roared amidst their gullies, or with thundering din swept, in broad masses, over their precipitous ledges. Yet sometimes, opening to the left, they admitted the eye to some contracted spot that seemed like a little Eden embosomed in the wild, some spot in which there were blue reposing waters, and the russet verdure of autumn, and the brown haycock, and the small orchard, its trees bending beneath the weight of golden fruitage, and sheltered by the close-set forest plants, and the white cottage, with its curling smoke and dark windows, peered

from its eglantine and jasmine vesture like the queen of the small domain ; and sometimes the sounds of rustic labour, or the whistle or the whoop, that invited to the rustic meal, ascending, chequered the monotony of the cataract's roar.

The traveller often paused to enjoy the beauties of such a spot, and then, with a reluctant sensation, turned from the gloomy aperture, that, stretching forward in dark perspective, let it in upon the eye, and passed forward into deeper desolation, like some pilgrim amidst the waste of life, upon whose jaded spirit the soft and varied light of fancy rests ; its ray is warm and benign, and woos to pleasure and repose ; but pleasure and repose are not for him ; they are dangerous, they unfit the mind for life, for life is toil and care ; if we have to pass the arid belt that borders the green hills of Yemen, we must not linger beneath the scented foliage of the aromatic plant that crowns them with its shade.

As the traveller proceeded, he perceived, at almost every step, still stronger traces

of his vicinage to those lofty regions, amidst which a hardy race, of mind elevate as the towering ridges that enabled them to defy the great ones of the earth, dwelt content, free, simple, and happy ; he had, even in his earliest youth, imbibed from his earliest friend some knowledge of the productions of nature, and he now recalled his memory with that pleasing sentiment that the memory of the good deceased ever imparts, as he recognised the various Alpine plants, of which specimens had enriched his cabinet. The spiguel, starwort, and toad-flax, here and there sprung from the crevices of the rock, and sometimes chequered its dark surface with small patches of fading green. The rocks rose in larger masses, and in each deeper recess that had excluded the sun, the winter's snows lay yet unmelted. On the outside of such a recess, where the cliff sometimes stretched its surface to the southern ray, and turning in a quick angle, broke the northern blast, thus forming another recess, filled with a pleasant warmth, the hunter

of the bounding chamois had sometimes built his summer's hut, and surrounded it with a patch of culture, so that a narrow projection of the rock separated the white masses, from which a gelid moisture trickled in a thousand rills, as the furrows of the cliff afforded it channels; from the harvest of some dozen shocks; and a fire, built up against a mound of earth, by which a tame goat slumbered, and from which a shaggy dog starting up, and rushing to the edge of the precipice, barked at the distant but approaching traveller, anxious to protect the scanty property of his absent master.

The road, which had hitherto been broad and apparently beaten, now grew narrower and narrower, was often marked with lines of grass, and at length terminated in extensive pasture-grounds; crossed, in a variety of directions, by paths, worn by cattle, that wandered about in herds, or reposed in groups by a small lake, the banks of which were thinly planted with pines, poplars, and chesnut trees. The



plain, extending in front nearly as far as the eye could reach, appeared then to be lost amidst rocks, similar to those from which it had opened, and was closed in on either side by the same. These to the right bounded the view, but to the left they declined into a deep dell, beyond which a high, mountainous ridge arose, its sides richly clothed with beech, and oak, and larch, and sometimes broken into inequalities, presenting slopes, and knolls, and hanging terraces, in endless variety. In the part where it rose to its greatest elevation, its acclivity sunk into a deep gulley, in which the sheeted foam of a cataract was occasionally discerned beneath the dark masses of the pines, and the spreading foliage of the beech, now reddening with autumnal tints, that overhung it, and the waters occasionally bursting upwards in a shower of spray, the beams of the mid-day sun passing through them, spread upon the dark woods beyond the prismatic hues in all their rich variety.

A little below, where the green summit

of the mountain itself, broken into vale and eminence, rose from its leafy vesture, a rustic bridge was flung across the cataract. It appeared, as well as the distance permitted the traveller to judge, to be formed of the trunk of a single tree; and when he viewed the pointed rocks that here and there rose from the bed of the torrent beneath, and the immense elevation at which it was placed, he could not sufficiently admire the hardy spirit of the agile mountaineer who was wont to cross it.

Except this and the grazing herds, he could discern, as he looked around the solitude, no trace of man. He whooped, in the hope that the woods, or some hollow among the rocks, concealed a shepherd or a hunter's cabin; but there was no answer but the echo of his own voice, that vibrated amidst the steeps.

He stood still for some moments; the deep solitude and silence of the place filled his spirit with a sublime and melancholy feeling. As the wind swept from him the sullen roar of the cataract, the silence was

so profound, that the plash of the steer's foot, as he stood in the lake, and the whisk of his tail as he brushed the insects from his side, came full on his ear, though the bank was still at a considerable distance.

He was about to whoop again, when suddenly the note of a distant bell caught his attention. It rung clear, but, as well as he could conjecture, at a great distance, and appeared to be the dinner-bell of some monastery; shortly after the echoes of a hunter's horn rung on the other side, but also at a great distance. Bewildered and uncertain what course he should pursue, he was about to return, when a shrill whistle to his right arrested his steps; it was repeated in a variety of notes; and as he looked anxiously towards the quarter from whence it had proceeded, he saw a *troop of marmots*, which he knew to be such by the description he had read of them, issue from the rocks, and scudding across the plain, bound downwards into the vale.

Hoping that some hunter was in chase of them, he stood for a while expecting

to see him or his dogs emerge. No one appeared ; but the whistle, as he thought, of the marmots, again came from beyond the valley. He looked and listened ; and he soon saw the troop climb the side of a rock that projected from the wood. Here they stopped for a minute or two ; but he could conjecture, from their anxious motions, for they sometimes stretched themselves forward over the steep, and sometimes rose on their hinder feet to listen, that they were in alarm. The whistling continued ; but he thought it came from a part of the wood much beyond where they were. They soon again bounded off ; and in this manner they disappeared and reappeared several times, the whistling still receding, and they appearing to follow it, but with much caution and timidity.

At length it was lost in the deeper sound of the cataract that it had appeared gradually to approach ; and once more he was about to retreat, when his eye was suddenly caught by a human figure bounding across the hanging bridge. He now comprehend-

Bourfrood, made much finer and broader than those by which the country was usually traversed, frequently led travellers into a mistake similar to that into which he had fallen, and from which he had frequently had the pleasure of extricating them. He then pointed to a height over which the main road passed; and wishing the traveller a pleasant journey, turned back to resume his sport.

Edward soon reached the point to which he had been directed; and having continued his ride for some miles without molestation, emerged, about that time of the day when the autumnal evening's sun strikes warmest on the earth, from a deep and barren vale, upon a scene which burst upon his delighted eye, with the suddenness and splendor of enchantment.

He stood midway on the side of a steep hill, that bounded a rich broad valley, through which the blue sparkling waters of the majestic Rhine swept in broad and sinuous course; on either side, upon a fertile plain, were spread in gay profusion all

those symptoms of pastoral wealth and comfort on which the eye of unsophisticated man loves to repose. The vane of many a village spire glittered in the sun-beam, and the red-tiled roof of many an embowered cottage, embossed with moss and houseleek, vied with the mellow tints of the autumn-coloured foliage from which it peeped. Numerous herds and flocks roved amidst the thick-set hayricks, cropping the lattermath, or reposed beneath the shade of luxuriant hedgerows, the russet verdure of whose foliage was studded with scarlet clusters.

In one close the laden waggon creaked beneath the produce of the bounteous soil—in another a row of husbandmen bent over their sickles, while sun-embrowned maidens bound into sheaves the ears that fell in profusion before them; and now from one party, and now from another, as the jest of each prevailed, the peal of rustic merriment burst forth, and filled the vale with joyous din.

Flocks of pigeons rose from the stolen

repast, at the whoop of the peasant-boy, and darkening the air in their flight, stooped upon the shocks of some less careful farmer; and long lines of domestic water-fowl now stemmed the ample stream—now rising flapped their wings, and screamed and pursued each other in sportive circles, and now quietly sought their food amidst the rushes that occasionally lined its banks.

Here the patient angler advanced silently along the margin of the river, watching with practised eye if haply some welcome plunge might break its surface; and there the dog, with quivering nose, and tail fixed in horizontal point, drew cautiously on the covey, into which the arquebuse of his master poured the leaden death, as they rose with loud cluck and rushing flutter.

Amidst the scene of toil and pleasure, a pair of rustic lovers, who seemed to live but for themselves, crept cautiously, shunning observation, along the hedgerow paths; and sometimes the daring fingers of the youth wandered amidst the cluster-

ing ringlets that shaded the maiden's neck, and were pushed aside with half-reluctance; and sometimes his arm enfolded the slender waist, and sometimes a kiss was wooed and granted with averted lips, that could not be reached till neck was twined round neck; and at length they reached the wonted hawthorn, and the love-inspired strain rose from the pastoral pipe, as they sat beneath it, filling the air with sweetness, and trembling on the stream that ran with swift but silent lapse at their feet.

Beyond this pleasant vale the land rose in great variety of surface, but still rich with the treasures and delights of pastoral life; each rock-cinctured recess had its cottage—each sunny slope or woody level its hamlet; the undulating lines of forest summits stretched beyond, sometimes broken by a castled steep, and sometimes half-disclosing to the view the upland town, white in the evening sun, and sometimes the gleaming cataract, with its wind-scattered spray ascending like smoke into the atmosphere.



The background of the lovely and magnificent landscape was formed by the Alpine heights of Appenzel, and the Tyrol, crowned with everlasting snows, that tinged with a thousand hues, partaking of the virgin delicacy of the substance they adorned, reared their cold masses into the firmament, glowing with the beams of the autumnal sun, as if in proud defiance of the all-pervading luminary, that now, with rapidly westering career, was hastening to shroud himself behind them from the eye of man.

The place where the exile emerged upon the vale was situated, as we have already said, upon the side of the steep that formed its eastern boundary. To the left it rose in a straight line, and now spreading in curves or angles, as was requisite to its projections, now overarched with pensile foliage, and now presenting to the eye of the traveller its surface traversed by the panniered ass, or the wayfaring peasant, his worldly treasure pendant from the staff that rested on his shoulder.

To the right it ascended in the same man-

ner ; but before it quite reached the summit, it stretched boldly forward to the edge of a precipice, that hung, as it were, in air, lowered over the valley, and then with a sudden wheel retired amidst rocks, leaving a diagonal line of some length exposed to the view of the traveller.

While he gazed enraptured on the scene that lay before him, and hailed the sublime heights by which it was bounded, amidst whose peaceful and secluded covers he was soon to enjoy a freedom from persecution, he was suddenly startled by a loud whistle, that rung shrill amidst the cliffs above ; and looking up to examine from whence it proceeded, he perceived a man standing upon a point of rock that appeared to command the road, where it retired from his view. He had scarcely time to reconnoitre this person, before his ear was again assailed by a loud clatter of hoofs, and presently he saw several men on horseback emerge from the pass, and gallop towards him at full speed.

This way being somewhat lengthened by

the bend already noticed in the road, this circumstance gave him time, in some degree, to collect his surprised and scattered thoughts; and finding, on a little consideration, no reason to doubt that the persons he saw were his pursuers, who in all probability had stationed themselves so remote from where he stood, in order to command some other pass of the mountain by which, led by chance, he might have issued, he immediately resolved to put to the best advantage the distance he was still from them, and accordingly pushing his steed into a gallop, descended into the valley; but what was his consternation upon reaching the bottom, to find the road effectually blocked up by a waggon load of hay, that had been overturned, apparently by accident, but really, as he felt little doubt, to intercept his flight.

Giving himself now up for lost, he once again prepared for a vigorous resistance; but again chance befriended him. As he looked wistfully at the river, which was separated from him by a single field, but into

which field ingress was prohibited by a high gate, fast locked, a little boy came whistling towards it, driving a cow before him, and with a key in his hand. He opened it—the horsemen were yet at some distance—Edward entered, notwithstanding the angry remonstrances of the young farmer, to whom he threw a piece of money, beseeching him to lock the gate again; then rushed to the bank, and plunging in, directed his horse's head towards a point of the opposite shore, that having been made to shelve into the river for the purpose of watering cattle, afforded an easy landing-place.

The horse could swim better than he could leap; and as his broad chest cleft the green surges of the cool transparent flood, his rider patted his outstretched neck, and reverting his eye, saw with great satisfaction that the boy had locked the gate, and was parleying with the horsemen, with respect to whose business all doubt was now dispersed, for they evidently wanted him to open it;

and one of them alighting, appeared inclined to enforce acquiescence.

They were still, however, on the outside, when he landed safely, and resumed his route along the first road that presented itself at full speed ; but looking back from an eminence which afforded the last view he was likely to have of the river for some time, (for the road onwards wound in among the hills, and no part of it was to be seen,) he perceived that they had gained their point ; and as he descended the slope before him, he distinctly heard one, and then another, and another, plunge in the river.

As he passed on, the peasants ran from their work to gaze at the phenomenon of a cavalier with brandished sabre riding at full speed through their peaceful fields ; and as he contemplated other groups who, unreached by the sound of his flight, were quietly pursuing their toil, or others who, having just completed their harvest, danced beneath the shade of a spreading chestnut-tree, to the sound of the rebec,

he could not help reflecting, little favourable as was his situation to an operation of the mind that requires repose, on the contrast afforded by their situation and his own; content in the lowly vale of life, they had never sought the perilous eminence on which the lightning had scathed his brow, and the whirlwind pursued him in his descent.

For a considerable time he did not dare stop to listen for the sounds of pursuit; but at length having passed the entrance to several roads, which he hoped might have bewildered his pursuers, he stopped; there were none but peaceful sounds to be heard, and he again proceeded at a more moderate pace.

The sun was approaching the summits of the glaciers, that were every moment assuming a deeper purple, while the air in which they rested was, with corresponding celerity, kindling into flame, already separated from the upper ether by a faint and uncertain line of crimson, when the exile

found that he had exchanged the cheerful bustle of closely-peopled hills and dales, for the still solitude of the forest, in which nothing but the low note of the wood-cricket interrupted the evening carol of the blackbird, and where the vision was bounded on all sides by the "close dungeon of innumerable boughs," save when the gigantic Alp, brought close by the want of intervening objects, seemed to raise its now dark head almost immediately above them.

He had not proceeded far through this woodland gloom, when it opened into a long vista of the forest; and as he entered it, he beheld with inexpressible satisfaction a stone cross, an inscription on which informed him that he trod upon the soil of freedom, that he was within the territory of the canton of Appenzel.

## CHAP. III.

This is a creature,  
Would she begin a sect, might quench the zeal  
Of all professors else—make proselytes  
Of who she bid but follow. SHAKESPEARE.

HE now threw the rein upon his horse's neck, and having returned thanks to Providence for again saving him from the fangs of oppression, rode slowly on; but he had not proceeded far, when it struck him, as he considered the wild and lonely aspect of the place, that he must be at a considerable distance from any place which would be likely to afford him a lodging for the night, and observing on a line of sward that separated the road on each side from the depths of the forest, a luxuriant and tender herbage springing amidst the roots of the brushwood with which it was partially covered, he resolved to seize the means it



afforded of refreshing the animal to whose services he owed his safety.

He accordingly alighted, and disincumbering his mouth of the bit, led him into the grateful pasture, still moving slowly on as he grazed.

The evening was calm and lovely; a light haze lent an additional softness to the umbrageous coverts of a thousand hues by which he was surrounded. It was one of those autumnal evenings that inspire us with the same melancholy delight as that with which we listen to the pleasant converse of the friend and guide of our youth, upon whose brow the grey lock shades the time-hollowed furrow, whose sentiment, if less glowing and energetic, is more benign, but whose eye is soon to be quenched, whose tongue is soon to be silenced in the mansions of eternal rest.

As the exile advanced, the sweet stillness was sometimes broken by forms and sounds of forest life. A herd of wild deer started from their lair among the bushes at his approach, stared at him for a moment, and

then suddenly turning, bounded through the thicket—the woodpecker's various plumage glowed in the slant sunbeam, as it flitted, with harsh note of alarm, across the glade—the pat of the rabbit's foot gave warning to his fellows of the intrusion of man—and a flight of wood-pigeons, with rapid descent, filling the tops of a cluster of tall elms and chestnut-trees, at a little distance, were effectually concealed amidst the dense foliage, their soft cooings alone proclaiming their resting-place.

Their cooings were soft, but softer still were the accents that met the ear of the exile, as he passed behind a close thicket, formed by the brushwood, that in some places had entirely usurped the soil, and which lined a low bank, that at some little distance ran parallel with the road. They came from the other side of the thicket; and the exile thought, as he listened with curiosity and surprise, that he had elsewhere heard them, and heard them with pleasure.

"I cannot think of letting you risk your

health on my account," said a voice, in the French language; "I think I shall now be able to get on."

"No," replied another, which Edward immediately recognised for that of his former *protégée*, the widow of the Spanish officer, whom the reader will recollect he had a short time before met at the hostel; "I could plainly perceive, by the last attempt you made to walk, that you were wholly inadequate to it. I trust I shall take no harm; the night promises to be fine—see how red the sky is, above those mountains behind which the sun has just gone down! and how clear and sweetly mild the air is! we shall find, at no great distance, some secluded part of the forest, where by hanging our cloaks over some bushy covert, and collecting some of the large leaves of the sycamore, which have already fallen in considerable abundance, to serve us for a bed, we shall be able to make tolerable shift to repose till morning. Come, come, I won't have any more objections; we must e'en for one night be content to share the

dwelling of the hare and the roe—happy if, like them, the simplicity of our wants enabled us to fly for ever the haunts of man, of man, the chief business of whose life it is to prey upon the timid and defenceless.”

As the poor wanderer pronounced these words, she turned her head, and perceiving the exile, who pleased, more than he could conceive why he should be, at again meeting the young musicians, was advancing to greet them, screamed, and was about to fly, accompanied by her daughter, for the youth stood his ground with great intrepidity, when a voice, soothing as familiar, arrested their steps.

Their alarm was changed to pleasure as soon as they recognised their friend; and after a friendly salutation, the mother informed him that they had been endeavouring to increase their little stock, previous to their returning to France, by attending at fairs in the adjacent villages; they had been at one on the preceding day, and were proceeding to another that was to be held on the morrow, when Juan and The-

resa, being a little wilful, had, notwithstanding her remonstrances, loitered among the bushes, gathering blackberries, until the latter, as a judgment, she supposed, for her disobedience, had got a thorn in her foot, which, though she had succeeded in extracting it, had still left her incapable of walking.

Edward observed, that the meeting was lucky for all, inasmuch as he should now have a guide to a lodging for the night, to which, by aid of his horse, she might also proceed without any danger of exasperating her wound.

His proposal was joyfully accepted; and having again bitted the animal, he raised the invalid in his arms, and placed her on the saddle; but he felt he knew not how as he performed this friendly office; the maiden's face was dark, but yet it was eminently lovely; and the thin summer garment that shrouded her limbs, permitted him to perceive their elastic fullness and exquisite polish, that slipped upon his arm as he swung her to her seat. The ruddiest

lips of the fairest daughter of his native land never opened in a sweeter smile than that which accompanied the expression of her thanks, and within her dark eye there was fascination.

He felt something that might have been called relief, as she averted it from him to adjust the straw hat that confined the clustering profusion of her ringlets, to wrap round her the cloak, that falling back as he had lifted her from the ground, had displayed the fine proportions of her shape, and to exhibit, while she gathered up the reins of the bridle, a hand and arm of nature's most cunning workmanship.

Her eye was averted, but the fragrance of her breath, and the sweetness of her voice, as she patted the neck of the steed, and cried—"Poor fellow!" had fascination too; and the exile, labouring under its influence, spent near five minutes adjusting the cloak and petticoat, and fitting the stirrup to the wounded foot, and was in all probability about to spend uncon-

sciously, as many more in the same manner, when he was wrested from the spell that held him by the voice of the lad, who observed, with something of archness in his manner, that Theresa would travel more expeditiously on foot than on horseback, if the cavalier was, in the latter case, to act in the capacity of her groom.

The mantling blood of the lovely Spaniard was immediately visible through the bronze of her countenance; but there was, as the exile thought, ere he had cast his eyes to the ground, a shade of triumph blended with her confusion. The feelings of each, of whatever nature they might be, found vent in a sigh, and the party proceeded.

Theresa did not appear to want for skill in managing a horse; but whether that which now bore her was fatigued by the forced speed at which he had lately travelled, or was weak from the want of food, or required the nervous arm of a man to bear him up against a natural propensity he had to that Indian form of salute known

by the name of a salam, certain it is, that from the time that he exchanged his burthen, his services seemed to much more than counterbalance the ease they afforded, by the danger to which his dubious footing exposed his rider. He stumbled at every second pace ; and at length having actually performed his customary obeisance, fairly dislodged Theresa from her seat, who would have been, in all probability, seriously hurt, had not Edward, who happened to be close to her, received her in his arms.

The difficulty which had appeared to be obviated was thus renewed ; but Edward, after maturely weighing the various causes to which the animal's want of foot might be owing, at length imputed it to the last of those above enumerated, and proposed that he should resume the saddle, and take the maiden behind him ; Theresa did not wish her mother to spend the night in the forest, and therefore acquiesced ; but she blushed as she acquiesced.

Alas, Luisa ! the memory of thy love, that hath filled, with its lofty and melan-



choly sweetness, that bosom upon which thou didst, well pleased, breathe thy last sigh, is about to encounter a rivalry more trying than, he who cherished it thought it ever would be exposed to.

He thought it was safe, for he had known many countenances of glowing loveliness, many forms of perfect symmetry; but he imagined that all that soft delicious fragrance of the soul that could impart to them attractions for the heart, as well as for the eye, slept in the grave of Rosemalde.

He was mistaken, to what extent we shall not decide; the fair reader, who, more distinctly than love-blinded man, can perceive the foibles of her sex, will judge for herself; but sure it is, that the soul of Theresa was lovely as her form, mild as the melting sweetness of her voice.

The exile felt the danger of his situation, but the reader has already perceived that he was a tolerably industrious, if not an ingenious reasoner, when he was disposed to be deceived. The danger he thought would not last; he and the witching Ibe-

rian would soon be separated for ever; but that reflection had its sigh, and he resigned himself to the sweet delirium that was seizing his senses.

He took off his cloak, and folding it smoothly into a pad, fastened it behind the saddle; again he raised his lovely burden to her seat, and again felt a sensation more delightful, though it was mingled with the pain of probable evanescence, than ever touch of woman had before imparted; but when the taper arm had encircled his waist, and the fragrant breath was warm upon his neck, good Heaven, how was every fibre strained with intensity of satisfaction!

The party was once more in motion, as the shades of night falling thick around them, deepened the gloom of the forest, and swelled the outline of the huge impendent glaciers. Already the bat wheeled in dim circle, like the flitting form of another world, and already had the night-ingle preluded to the song that was to waste its sweetness on the lonely night-

breeze of the wild. The scene was such as could mingle a certain sublimity and tenderness with every sensation capable of receiving them. It mingled them with the reviving energies of love in the bosom of the exile, made passion seem like the chastened ardour of friendship, and stilled the remorse consequent on faltering resolution.

In that still hour, he would have given a diadem to have been alone with the maiden; not for purposes of freer converse; he thought he would have spoken less to her; but he felt that the pressure of her arm, as the horse tripped, would have been sweeter in perfect solitude, and he would have liked to have been able to cast his eye back upon the small foot that projected from the flank of the horse, without subjecting himself to the penetrating glance of an arch and observant youth, whose anxiety, too, to discover the part of the road that was most free from ruts, and point it out to his notice, he thought was more troublesome than useful.

It was a wild madcap, who seemed to partake of the restless spirit of the people among whom he had been reared, for he would often become impatient of the silence begotten of night, and of scenery filled with mass and outline, shadowy and sublime, and send his merry carrol into the glade, o'erarched by the far-stretching boughs of the full-foliaged oak ; but so sweet, so soft was that carrol, that notwithstanding it was poured in tripping cadence, it augmented the solemn and tender feelings it was meant to dispel.

Then he would seem to wonder at his failure, and tell the cavalier that he would find, in the village of Wiesendorf, to which they were proceeding, gamesome damsels, who would dispel his melancholy, although it were occasioned by thwarted love ; and then his sister and his mother would chide him, and desire the exile to excuse his boldness.

The boy seemed too secure, however, of their love to be repressed by their anger ; but at length his spirits yielded, though

apparently with reluctance, to the pressure of the still, dark solitude ; and Edward enjoyed, without interruption, the sweet sensations of incipient, though as yet almost unconscious love, amidst the silence and loneliness of nature.

Nearly an hour had elapsed since a word had been exchanged, during which time the party had proceeded at a slow pace, each indulging the musings that best pleased their fancy, favoured as they were by the monotony of the forest scene, changing only from a denser to a lighter shade, or presenting, as the road wound through the forest, some fantastic and yet unseen configuration of the impending Alps, when, just as they entered a long avenue, that seemed gradually to decline towards the base of the mountains, and at the extremity of which a faintly-glimmering light was seen to move athwart the gloom, and then vanished, the silence was broken by the young Juan, who, clapping his hands, and springing from the ground, cried—  
“There is Wiesendorf. Now, milord, guard

your heart," added he, "for I can assure you that the damsels of the hostel, where we are to be lodged, are very handsome and very kind. I dare say, if Theresa, there, who is a great sermonizer, were to speak her mind now, she would read you a long lecture on the wisdom of avoiding temptation, and would exhort you to return into the forest, and seek that sort of lodging, from the comforts of which you have saved us. Persons of our sex—pooh! I mean persons of her sex, never think beauty an useful possession in any hands but their own."

"Juan, Juan, how can you run on so!" said the mother; "our good friend will assuredly think you mad. You have no right to make such insinuations with respect to the young women at the hostel; if they were free in their manners with you, it was undoubtedly because they considered you as a child."

"A child indeed!" said Juan, bridling up, and throwing his cap on one side, and endeavouring to exchange the mincing

paces of youth for a fierce military strut ;  
“ I'll venture to say, my childhood was my  
least claim to their favour ; they said I was  
a fine, manly little fellow ; but I much fear  
that Monsieur's brown whiskers and soldier-  
like air will cut me completely out of  
feather.”

## CHAP. IV.

Dire dealings with the fiendish race,  
Had mark'd strange lines upon his face;  
Vigil and fast had worn him grim.      MARMION.

JUAN was still rattling on, in spite of the remonstrances of his mother and sister, when they arrived on the village green, where several persons were busy, notwithstanding that it had been dark for some time, pitching tents, erecting booths, and making other preparations for the festivities and business of the ensuing day, while a number of little boys were busily employed fanning a bonfire, that, built up at the edge of the forest, was just beginning, with fitful flame, to violate its gloom; and others were blowing horns, in restless anticipation of the morrow's sports: one of these urchins, who happened to pass the travellers, having looked attentively in the face of the young minstrel, caught him,



with surprise and joy, by the hand, crying —“ Ah, Juan ! Ah, Theresa !” and then suddenly darting into a house at some little distance, soon returned, accompanied by three girls, who all running forward, exclaiming—“ Juan ! Theresa !” pressed round the former, vying with each other in the warmth of their embraces.

Juan made a suitable return for their caresses, and it was some time before they had leisure to examine the stranger behind whom Theresa rode ; as soon, however, as he caught their attention, he seemed likely, in part at least, to fulfil the prophecy of Juan ; they dropped him several low curtsies—seemed ashamed of their *etourderie*—and having learned the accident that had befallen Theresa, assisted her to alight with great care and gentleness.

The eyes of Theresa were fastened upon the exile, while the maidens, upon whose forms, which lacked no village elegance, and countenances glowing with health and beauty, the slant rays of the bonfire just then streamed, saluted him.

Some strong emotion, meanwhile, seemed to engross her, so as to still the pain of her foot, unless it might have been refreshed by the rest it had enjoyed, for she trod firmly upon it, till Edward, having nodded with good-humoured indifference to each of the damsels, turned towards her, and having, with a voice, the tones of which were all liquid with tenderness, inquired how she felt herself, raised her in his arms, to carry her to a stone bench at the door of the hostel. As he lifted her, she moaned faintly, but that moan seemed the sound of pleasure, not of pain.

The friendly maidens were soon all busied about her; one stripped and fomented her foot, while another took charge of her mandoline, and another ran to her aunt, who happened to be the doctress of the hamlet, for a salve of never-failing virtue.

The girls seemed to bear towards her a sisterly affection, which, considering that the acquaintanceship had been but of a very short duration, reflected no small credit

dit on the disposition of her who could inspire it.

Meanwhile she endeavoured to repress their eagerness to promote her ease, as well as the solicitude of Edward, assuring them that the pain had quite subsided, and reminding them that her fellow-travellers were in need of refreshment.

A rustic meal was soon prepared, and the cloth laid outside the door; for the extreme mildness of the air, and the soft radiance of the rising moon, invited the travellers to remain without, rather than subject themselves, while they ate, to the close air of the small dwelling, the walls of which still held the heat of the sultry day that had passed.

While the repast lasted, Edward observed with what kindness and solicitude the grey-headed parents united their efforts with those of their daughters, to render it agreeable; he contrasted it with the harshness the poor wanderers had experienced in his presence on a former occasion; and while he rejoiced to think that

Kindness of heart was a virtue not altogether unknown upon the earth, he thought that it were well to pass the pilgrimage of life in company with those, who, fraught with it themselves, know how to attract it.

The hospitable villagers forbore to disturb their guests, while they ate, with inquiries as to where they had been since they had seen them, and the intervals of silence between their kind solicitings to taste the various simple, but sweet and salubrious viands which they had brought forth in profusion, were filled up only by the occasional sound of the mallet-driven stake, or the soft breathings of the wind in the linden trees, that stretched their branches over the mossy roof of the dwelling, or the hoarse and distant murmurs of the forest.

But when the meal was concluded, and the country wine went merrily round, then the damsels had a thousand questions to ask, and a thousand anecdotes to tell, and a thousand hopes to express, that the minstrels would prolong their stay.

Again they pressed round Juan, whom it was obvious they did consider as a child, and Juan made many ludicrous efforts to play the man; he now chucked one, and now another, under the chin, and assumed all the airs of the proprietor of a haram; but it was all in vain; the reserved and respectful tone of their manners towards the exile, on whose marked and manly features, nevertheless, their looks sometimes rested with much complacency, sufficiently shewed that their freedom had nothing in it of the wantonness that the conceited youth had seemed inclined to impute to them; and at length, apparently vexed to find that all his gallantries could not provoke a single frown of repression, but were uniformly met with laughter, and threats of the village pedagogue, he suddenly started up, after having swallowed a bumper, and, seizing his mandoline, gave vent, in a lively air, to the spirits inspired by the exhilarating beverage.

The music soon drew around them a number of young people, who had come

to the fair, and were enjoying the cool evening at the doors of the respective dwellings in which they were lodged. Some of them marked their perception of the melody by nodding their heads, others by beating time with their feet. Juan perceived the influence of the strain, and redoubling the spirit with which he played, there was soon a dance beneath the linden trees.

Among the females who composed the group, there was a young girl of exquisite beauty, the grace, ease, and flexibility of whose movements formed a contrast with the more impetuous agility of her companions, when, according to the figure of the dance, she and the other girls separated from their partners, and wheeled in rapid circles on the green.

As spectator that but moderately indulged the wanderings of fancy, would have thought himself in one of those forest-embosomed moonlight scenes, which the intruding breath of man might dispel in an

instant; he would have thought the airy form that constituted the capital figure in the group a Titania or a Dian, surrounded by her nymphs.

Edward, who sat on the bench by Theresa, pointed out to her the elegant peasant; a man who stood near them overheard his remarks, and informed him that she was the daughter of the landamman of a neighbouring canton, and had been brought up at Vienna, where she had received all the culture the best masters could bestow.

Theresa put her hand to her foot, and as the moonbeam fell upon her countenance, the exile perceived that it was slightly distorted with pain. He looked no more at the landamman's daughter; and she, who had looked often at him, and seemed to care little for the notice of any one else, as soon as she perceived that she no longer attracted his, retired from the dance.

Theresa's foot got ease again, and the freedom from pain gave her a flow of

spirits, in which there was mingled, however, some confusion, arising from whatsoever cause, which she seemed anxious to conceal; and she soon joined the notes of her instrument to those of her brother.

The dance continued with additional spirit; but after a little time, the exile, who had his eye steadfastly fixed on the form of Theresa, as, with all her wonted grace, she swept the chords of the instrument, thought he perceived that she touched them with a fainter hand; the cause, whatever it might be, seemed, too, to extend itself not only to her brother, but to the dancers, whose movements, from the agility that had before characterized them, became heavy and languid. While he was wondering what benumbing power had crept into the atmosphere, they gradually dropped off, one by one—the girls of the hostel returned to the bench where he was sitting, and the minstrels ceased to play; to wild and boisterous mirth succeeded a profound and unbroken silence; and he



was still wondering what could have effected so sudden and extraordinary a change, when Juan, who stood beside him, and had remarked his astonishment, touched his elbow, and without daring to raise his own eyes from the ground, desired him to look towards an elm, that stood at a little distance on the green.

He looked, and presently discerned a tall shadowy figure leaning against it.

He started—it struck him that it was the same person who had spoken to him on the night that he had heard the music by the lake in the wood—the person in whom Gasper had recognised the redoubted Walmer. He examined him with attention; there was the same gaunt and gigantic figure, the same long, pale, thoughtful countenance, the same dark and bushy brow; but still the imperfect view he had had on the former occasion would not allow him to decide, and an accidental likeness, assisted by similarity of situation, might deceive him.

“I’ll speak to him,” said he, in a low

voice ; and he was rising to execute his purpose ; but turning first towards Theresa, he perceived an entreaty in her eye that he would not quit them, and he sat down.

The figure stalked silently away.

The silence continued unbroken.

" Who is it ?" said Edward.

The host and his wife and daughters, Theresa, her mother, Juan, all looked at each other, and each seemed afraid to answer the question.

" Who is it ?" repeated Edward.

The host looked fearfully round him, and then said, in a low and tremulous tone — " I don't very much care, Mein Herr, to talk about him at night time, and particularly when he's so near us ; I may tell you more of him before we part, but all I would like to say now is, that he is, or pretends to be, a conjurer, who goes about to fairs, shewing people what's to happen to them, and what has happened to them all their lives, and the like."

" His name ?" said Edward.

"Is Sternheim ; but I have known him pass by many other names in various parts of Germany, as well as Switzerland, where it has been my chance to meet him. He has as many names as lives, I believe, and those, they say, are far more numerous than any cat's. He is more feared about here, and indeed every where he happens to be, than a landamman, particularly after dark ; and if Mein Herr should stop here to-morrow, he may know, if he chuses, with how much reason."

While the exile mused upon what he had heard, the people of the inn and the travellers retired into the house ; and when he awoke from his reverie, he found himself alone.

He rose, and traversed the green in a variety of directions, in hopes of finding the object of his curiosity, determined, if he should, to inquire whether he was the person who had addressed him in so solemn and mysterious a manner in the wood, and what was his purpose in coming in his way at such a time, and in such a manner:

That it was Walmer, he had no doubt; and having none, the information which had been communicated by the fatal manuscript made it, as he felt, his duty to seek him.

It was now fast approaching to midnight, and all nature seemed lulled in profound repose. As he passed back and forward on the green, that was confusedly strewed with panniers and packages, the heavy breathing of their proprietors, slumbering beside them, was sometimes heard, and sometimes the watchful dog growled, and faintly barked at his approach, without rising from his warm lair beneath the shelter of the long-eared and shaggy companion of his wanderings; and sometimes from one of the few tents which had been already raised, came indistinct and broken sounds, uttered by some anxious son of labour, who anticipated in his sleep the busy conference of the morrow.

Edward viewed the quiet and reposing scene, chequered by the shade of tree and tent and waggon, falling athwart the moon-

light, and contrasted it with the busy hum that would soon grow with the growing light, and the activity and bustle with which man, toiling in eager search of the little he wants here below, would enliven the morning; and again in melancholy thought he cast his mind's eye forward into the interminable perspective, when they, and all their wants and wishes, and plans for their accomplishment, were lost in the haze of all-confounding time, when even the painful sensations that pressed his own heart would be lost in the boundless void; and he asked himself, why aught that is so evanescent should seem important?

But if the cares that fret the spirit of man—if the incentives that impel him to action be as undistinguishable specks in the scale of things, what is his own being but such a speck? finite as he is, he may for a moment commune with perceptions of infinitude, but they are too mighty for the feeble tenacity of his grasp, and soon again he moves with humility and pain in the prescribed and wonted circle.

So fared it with the exile; ere he had time to answer the question begotten by that calm which the tranquillity of external nature had inspired, his eye rested on the object connected with his more immediate and pressing disquietude, whom as yet he had sought in vain.

The tall dark figure was moving slowly at the edge of the wood: whether it was the dim light in which it appeared, caused by the projecting shade of the trees, or that fancy was cheated by the multiplied circumstances of mystery and horror that had aroused an interest with respect to it, or from whatsoever other cause the delusion, if delusion it was, might have proceeded, there appeared to the mind of the exile, as, unable for a moment to follow, he contemplated the shadowy shape, something in its gait and gesture that belonged not to beings whose views and thoughts were simply of earthly limit; he even thought that since he had seen it last, it was dilated in size; and ere he could follow it,

he had to steady his shaken nerves by the energy of collected spirit.

As he moved from the spot where he stood, the figure entered the forest. He quickened his pace. When he reached the place where it had disappeared, he stopped to listen—there was a slight rustling among the bushes at a little distance; he advanced, guided by his ear—he stopped again—the rustling had ceased—all was still as death.

Hopeless of reaching the object of his pursuit, he was about to return, and await the morning, when he thought he would be sure of a conference; but just as he was about to fulfil his intention, the figure crossed, at the same slow pace, an opening in the wood.

Again he sprung forward in pursuit, too impatient to seek a path, and making his way in a straight line through every impediment of brushwood, stumps of trees, and fragments of rock that opposed his passage; over these he frequently stumbled, and sometimes fell; but as he every now and then caught a glimpse of the figure,

in spots where the trees were felled, in order to afford room for cultivation, neither the bruises he received, nor the frequent disappointments he experienced, when almost sure of reaching him, could in the least slacken his ardour.

He had proceeded in this manner, as well as he could guess, about a mile, when he found himself on the edge of a large circular meadow, that was separated from the surrounding woodlands by a rude paling, over which he passed without much difficulty.

The surface of this meadow sloped gradually on all sides to the centre, in which rose a perpendicular object, the form of which the light was not sufficiently strong to enable him to discern. He advanced towards it, hoping that the eminence on which it was placed would enable him to discern the object of his search, if he should pass in any direction across the meadow. As he approached it, he perceived that it was a statue; and he had scarcely ascertained this, when he thought he could per-



ceive another figure slightly projected beyond it. Moving obliquely, in order to be certain whether this was the case, he once more perceived the person he had followed standing with his back towards him, and his eyes turned towards the ground, like one in deep meditation.

He was about to call to him; but not being sure that he did not wish to avoid him, and apprehensive that if that were the case, and that he were to regain the woods before he came up with him, he could, by the knowledge of its intricacies, easily baffle pursuit, he advanced with as little noise as possible, conceiving that he might easily steal on him unawares.

He had proceeded, however, but a few paces, when the figure turned, and paced slowly, with its eyes still fixed upon the ground. The statue was, by this movement, again interposed between it and the exile, who, in order to keep it in view, was obliged to advance in a kind of winding line. This, however, he found he was unable to do, and stopped till its own mo-

tion should have brought it in sight. No figure, however, appeared—he moved forward again—the statue alone was visible; and he was now near enough to discern that it was placed in the centre of a large circular pond, which the rise of the ground had hitherto prevented him from seeing.

When he reached the edge of it, he looked around on every side for the magician, for magician he was now altogether inclined to believe him; but he was nowhere to be seen. He called first in a low voice, and then louder and louder; but there was no answer; the silence of the midnight hour remained unbroken but by the low tinkling of water poured from a conch held by the statue, which was that of a Triton.

On examining the pond, he conjectured that a small rill he found to proceed from it, supplied the village with water, the source of which its inhabitants had ornamented through a feeling of gratitude for the benefits it conferred. He went round it again and again, closely inspecting its

banks; but they were quite clear of sedge, weeds, or any thing which could have afforded concealment to the smallest animal. The heavy plunge of several stones, which he threw in, in various places too, satisfied him that the depth of the pond would not permit of any one reaching the statue without swimming; and as its pedestal rose immediately from the water, no person could have concealed himself by aid of it but by swimming, and none could have swam with sufficient rapidity to have made such concealment effectual.

Wholly unable to account for the sudden disappearance of the figure, for no mortal speed could have enabled it to have reached the wood in the interval from the time when he had lost sight of it, till that when he had reached the eminence which commanded a view of the whole meadow, quite clear as it was of trees and other impediments to the sight, he stood wrapt in wonder, mingled with a certain degree of awe, which he could not overcome; and was about to retrace his steps to the village, when

once more casting his eyes around, in the faint hope of their yet resting on the object they had hitherto vainly wandered in search of, he perceived a light stream from a part of the wood a good deal to the right of that by which he had entered the meadow.

He recollected that the direction the figure had taken, as he followed it, declined considerably to the left ; and conceiving that he might find a shorter way back, by inquiring from the person or persons from whose dwelling the light proceeded, he advanced towards it.

## CHAP. V.

————— Of shapes that walk

At dead of night, and clank their chains, and wave  
The torch of hell around the murderer's bed.

AKENSIDE.

.....

Un spectre, dit l'un d'eux, paroit vers le grand bois;  
Le jour de la tempête ou entendit sa voix,  
Un autre en fait d'abord la peinture effrayante;  
Le crédule auditoire est saisi d'épouvante;  
Le silence et la peur augmentent par degré,  
Et plus près du foyer le circle est réservé.

ST. LAMBERT.

When the exile reached the wood, he found that the light came through the canvas of a kind of tent that was pitched against the face of a high bank, at some distance within it. As he approached it, he heard a person talking in a measured and solemn tone, as if communicating some momen-

tous information, or some extraordinary tale. He drew nearer—the name of Sternheim was mentioned—he stopped mechanically, fearful that his appearance might check the person who was speaking, and who he soon perceived was relating some wondrous feats he had seen performed by the magician, for as such he appeared firmly to hold him.

Edward felt himself irresistibly impelled to listen to any thing that was connected with this mysterious person, and though, when he first thought of doing so, the meanness of listening to what was not meant for his ear made him feel the blood all rushing through his head, yet reflecting that the substance of what would be revealed was only what, in all probability, many other individuals had witnessed, as well as the narrator, he climbed gently up the bank, and leaning over the top, received every word as it came through the roof of the tent.

He soon perceived that there were se-

veral persons within it, all of whom seemed to know something of the magician, and disposed to enliven a wayfaring banquet, round which they were seated, by communicating it. Several stories were told of him in succession, but none such as could have taken him out of the rank of an ordinary mountebank, till a voice which had as yet been silent, mingling no exclamation of wonder with those which the various feats of the magician had drawn forth in abundance, and the tones of which Edward thought were familiar to his ear the moment he heard them, was heard to say, after a short interval of silence, in a cadence of peculiar solemnity—"Compared to what I know of this man, all I have heard is nothing."

"Nothing!" repeated the whole company.

"Nothing!" again said one of them; "do you call it nothing to swallow fire as red hot as that which boiled our pot just now?"

"Nothing," said another, "to cut a piece of my coat, and join it again in an instant, without seam or welt?"

"Nothing," cried a third, "to let a man see that he knew a secret of his, that he had never communicated but to four persons in his life, and those were all dead?"

"Nothing to do this?" cried one—"Nothing to do that?" echoed another. The assertion seemed beyond endurance extravagant.

The person who had hazarded it resumed, in a composed tone, and one which appeared to indicate a little contempt for the understandings of his auditors—"What you have related seems, no doubt, wonderful enough; but I have, in the course of my life, seen many persons who could do as much, and more; and I know too that many of these things which have excited your wonder are simple deceptions, with the means of effecting which even I myself am acquainted; but what *I* have seen could have been no deception."



He paused.

"Good Heaven! I cannot think of it without my blood growing all chill in my veins, and a thrill of horror pervading all my limbs. But I fear it is now too late to tell it; you all, as well as myself, will have to be stirring betimes in the morning."

There was a universal cry of "No, no, pray go on."

"I have often been three nights without sleep, in fair time," said one, "without being much fatigued."

"I would rather hear about this same necromancer at any time than sleep, if I were ever so fatigued," said another.

"See!" cried a third, "we have two skins of wine yet, and it would be a thousand pities to leave them unfinished."

"But," said a fourth, in a low tone, "what if this man, or this devil, or whatever he may be, should be listening to us all this time? it's well known that wherever he may happen to be, he wanders about all night, while other folks sleep; and I

have heard that he has been known to take terrible vengeance upon persons who have made too free with his name."

The apprehension thus expressed appeared contagious. For some minutes no one spoke; at length—"I have thought," said one, in a half-whisper, "that the lamp has burned for the last half hour as though there was sulphur in the oil. Do you smell nothing?"

"No," replied another, "I can't say I do; but this dog has been very uneasy for some time. I have heard that dogs are very much afraid of spirits, and Sternheim is all as one, I suppose, as a spirit. I very well remember the night that my mother saw the ghost of my great-uncle, this very dog, he was then but a pup, as one may say, and might have been thought scarcely able to know what a ghost was, nevertheless he whimpered and whined the live-long night, and was heavy and dull the whole of the next day, and, in short, had like to have died of the distemper that was then rife among the dogs of our neighbourhood."

"Why, then, I suppose he caught the distemper of them, and not of your great-uncle," said one, who appeared, from the tone of his voice, not so much alarmed as his companions; "but is it not easy to know if Sternheim be there or not? take the lamp, and look out; I am impatient to hear the story that Herman has promised us."

"Look out! what, I!" replied the man who owned the dog; "not to be made an emperor! why, I wouldn't look out of my own cottage of a night after having listened to such things as I have been hearing now, let alone a tent in the middle of a wild wood, that I never was in but twice in my life before—why, I should be sure I saw a ghost peeping from behind every tree."

"Well then, reach me the lamp, and I'll look."

Edward crouched close to the bank, in order to avoid discovery; while the man having pushed aside the canvas by which the tent was closed, held the lamp above his head, and looked around.

The dog ran out, barking, and catching the scent of a stranger, put his nose to the ground, and began to beat about, as if in pursuit of game.

Courage is contagious, as well as fear; one, and another, and another, came forth, and the running of the dog seemed to attract the notice of all.

While they were attending to it, Edward chanced to cast his eye forward, and thought he perceived by the light of the lamp, which fell with a strong glare athwart the interlaced branches of the trees that were close set round the tent, the skirt of a dark and full garment, such as the magician had worn, first gently trailed along, and then jerked with a sudden flounce behind the trunk of a large oak.

If this were more than fancy, it escaped the notice of the rustics, who having in vain looked around to discover what the hound might be questing, at length acquiesced in the suggestion of him who had first come out, that a hare or rabbit had possibly been feeding at hand; and one of

them seizing the dog by the neck, and pitching him to his straw couch, they all resumed their seats, and with one voice desired their companion to gratify the curiosity he had excited.

“You all well know,” said he, “that my father, to whom most of you, I believe, went to school, was a man who conceived that learning was the best possession that any one could have; and that, in conformity to this opinion, he disbursed the savings of many years to keep me for two years at the university of Gottingen. I suppose learning, in the head of a sober-minded man, who would set no more than a just value on it, might be always useful; but I was rather a vain youth, and I think it increased my vanity, and did me mischief. I thought, and my poor father encouraged me in the thought, that to plough, and sow, and reap, and carry about cheese, and yarn, and such things, to fairs for sale, was employment little consistent with the dignity of erudition; and I fancy that the consequence of such a notion is, that while

you all, who could not entertain it, are pretty well to do in the world, and have your wives to cherish you, and your children to climb your knees when you return home from your labours, I am, as it were, beginning the world, and have neither wife nor child, nor any one to care for me. How far others may think this situation is compensated for by the respect with which you listen to my opinions, or the detail of my adventures in foreign parts, I shall not say; but without undervaluing your goodwill, from which, indeed, I have reaped some solid advantages, I could wish I had been content to bring some more substantial commodities to market than learning.

“ I shall not detain you from what you are now doubtless most anxious to hear, by a recapitulation of the various events of my life, from the time I left our village, till I entered into the service of the late baron Walstein, prime minister at the court of D——, in the capacity of clerk to his private secretary. In this situation I remained till the death of that nobleman,

which, as perhaps you do not know, for the bustle of faction, and the names of the important personages who create it, sometimes fail to reach, even in a murmur, the tranquil villager, though his lot may be influenced by the schemes of power, and the contentions of those who toil after it, I remained, I say, in this situation till the death of this nobleman, which happened but a short time since ; not that I did not very much dislike the service of a man who had so bad a character, I fear but too reasonably a bad character, as the baron ; but I feared if I should quit it, that I might never find another that would afford me what I was accustomed to consider as a decent subsistence ; for my notions as to that point, till hard necessity lately wrested them from me, were pretty high, and they it was that have kept me an isolated being in society, while you, the companions of my childhood, have made for yourselves a cheap and plain, but sweet and social happiness, undisturbed by yearnings after a station more elevated and respectable (if

elevation and respectability indeed can be the concomitants of dependence) than that which you saw your fathers occupy before you."

The man, whom as soon as he mentioned his having been in the service of baron Walstein, Edward perfectly recollected as one with whom, during the period of his ambassadorship, he had frequently transacted business, paused, as if to indulge some emotion by which his heart was agitated; and during a short interval nothing was heard but a yawn, that seemed to pass, as it were, by infection, from one to another of his auditors, till it went thoroughly round.

He then resumed his narration—"I find I have fatigued you already with my reflections; my learning has, among other evils to which it has subjected me, given me a habit of promulgating them when, perhaps, they are not altogether in place. But you will pardon me; and I shall no longer detain you from the tale I have promised to relate.



"Though none of you knew baron Walstein, you all knew count Steinberg, for he possessed a large estate in your neighbourhood; and the comfort in which he was used to place his vassals, has not unfrequently made your progenitors sigh to think that they had not so kind a lord."

"We all well remember him," said one of the party; "and now that you mention him, I well recollect the name of Walstein. A report was current in our village, for a long time after count Steinberg's death, that he was murdered by a person who bore it; but that, I dare say, was only such a report as idle people love to circulate, and had no truth in it."

"I fear me too much," replied Herman, in a solemn tone; "but why do I talk in the language of doubt? no one doubts it; and if it were dubious, what I am going to relate would, in itself, suffice to render it otherwise. The baron—but hark! what's that?"

There was a general movement of alarm

—“ Oh ! its only the church-bell of Wiesendorf striking one.”

The sound was full and clear, and seemed close at hand.

“ Well, I again incline to think it better to defer my narration till to-morrow night.”

There was an universal murmur of dissent.

“ Well, well, I see I must proceed ; but first fill this can with wine, and trim the lamp ; whether it be the hour, or the silence that reigns without, or whatever else, I don't feel as if I was doing what is altogether right ; yet many are acquainted with the thing, at least the greater part of it, as well as myself ; they did not occur in solitude—there were witnesses enow. Well, as you are so impatient, I must comply with your wishes.

“ The baron,” his voice sunk to a very low tone, but it was still perfectly audible in the deep stillness of the hour, “ the baron was used to retire from state affairs about a month or six weeks every summer. This time he used to spend at his coun-

try-seat, and he seldom returned to town without having given a ball to the nobility and gentry in the neighbourhood on his birthday. This entertainment he resolved, last summer, should be more splendid and magnificent than ever it was before ; and in order to beget a greater variety and freedom, the company was to be masked.

“ The entertainment, indeed, at any time, was not much to the baron’s taste, for he was an austere and reserved man ; but he loved ostentation in all its shapes, and that was what gave birth to it. Well, he sent for the best artists and cooks from several different places, and expended a vast sum of money in materials for the supper, and the decorations of the rooms and gardens, and had a theatre erected, in which a new comedy, by the court poet, was to be represented by his own people ; and, in short, nothing was omitted that might render the festival as delightful as possible ; he was himself employed several hours every day overlooking the workmen, and giving them directions ; and it seemed as

if the habitual gloom of his character had, in some degree, given place to the satisfied feelings that arise in our minds, from promoting the pleasure of others.

“ This sunshine of the soul, however, if it was such, was not of long continuance—it soon and suddenly changed to a fiercer tempest, I believe, than had yet shaken it; with the cause of this transition I became acquainted by accident, and I shall now, for the first time, relate how I became so:

“ The baron slept in a large chamber at the extremity of a range of apartments which were unoccupied, except when the castle was particularly thronged with visitors; and my principal, the private secretary, occupied a small room adjoining, for it was not unusual with the baron to pass whole nights without sleep, and frequently, when he was seized with a waking fit of this kind, he would call in this man, and dictate to him the result of his meditations, which, as I understood from him, were generally concerning affairs of state.

“ It happened that one day, while the

preparations for the *fête* were going forward, and the baron seemed to be taking more and more interest in them, this man sent for me, and informed me that he had obtained his lord's leave to be absent for a few days on his private business, during which time it would be necessary for me to execute his nocturnal duty, if there should be occasion; he added, that he did not think there would, for that since the baron had busied himself so much with a lighter subject, the more severe one of politics had got out of his mind, and he generally slept perfectly sound.

"He then brought me to the room in which I was to sleep, and shewed me a bell which would ring, when pulled by a string in the adjoining apartment, and give me notice if I should be wanted. At night I accordingly entered on my temporary duty.

"The baron retired to rest at an early hour, fatigued in consequence of having remained much out of doors in the course of a sultry day, directing and overlooking

the workmen. I remained below for some time after, and as I entered my room, being able to hear no sound in his, I concluded that he was asleep, and congratulated myself on the prospect of passing my night undisturbed.

"I had little inclination, however, at the moment to avail myself of the advantage, for having supped in the steward's room, whose wife had had some friends to see her from a neighbouring village, among whom were several young persons, the conversation happened to turn on love, and a number of simple narratives which had grown out of it, had left my mind in that state of half-pleasure, half-irritation, which the subject is wont to create, as we balance the pleasures and pains of which it is mixed up.

"I threw open my casement, and as I sat at it, enjoying the pleasant cool that had succeeded to the scorching heat of the day, and inhaled the scent of the various odorous shrubs that skirted the walks, and

were interspersed with the loftier plantations of the pleasure-grounds beneath, my thoughts turned, with sweet though melancholy retrospect, to the scenes of my boyish days, to the dance upon the green—to the fearful and cautious, but delightful ramble, in search of speckled eggs and half-fledged nestlings, amidst the forbidden paths of cultured close, or well-fenced cop-pice—to the fireside tale, the cheering smile, and pat of parental approbation, consequent on the excited hope that asks but little impulse—but chiefly to the poor maiden whom you all remember, to Rosa Stellmann, or, as she was more commonly called, according to the poetical nomenclature of my father, the '*Flower of the Hamlet*.'

"It was just a year before that I had heard of her having died unmarried, and entrusting to my sister, in her last hour, the secret of that love she had always cherished for me. I conned over, for the thousandth time, the many marks of it, which, absorbed by the ambition my father's

counsels had inspired, I had failed to notice at the time, but which, immediately on the receipt of the sad intelligence, had rushed upon my mind; the frequent flush of joy that accompanied my joy—the no less frequent paleness and shudder that my danger, for I was a bold and adventurous youth, never failed to create—the upbraiding tear (alas! it was her only reproach) that fell when her jealousy was excited—her efforts to partake the hopes that precipitated my departure, and the deeper dejection in which they always terminated—the convulsive grasp, and sobstified ‘*God bless you!*’ of her last farewell—the severe illness that, as I had heard, had immediately succeeded our separation—these had been, ever since I had heard of her death, amidst my most favourite themes of contemplation; though painful at first, time and repetition had mellowed them into pleasant and familiar melancholy; the operation, perhaps, of their healing was rendered more easy, by the reflection that



I had never wilfully injured her who loved me."

Edward sighed so heavily, as to alarm the people within the tent; and they did not settle again to hear the narrative of Herman, till another anxious examination of the surrounding objects had appeased their fears.

Herman then resumed—"I fear, from some symptoms I have observed, that I am not speaking very intelligibly to you, and if so, you must blame my learning, that often forces itself on me, when I could wish to dispense with it.

"But not to weary you still more by my apologies—as I sat at the open casement, I indulged myself in such musings as those I have described, and looked forward, with a mournful kind of satisfaction, to the day when I should be able to visit poor Rosa's tomb, and deck it with such sculpture, and such a legend, as might do honour to her memory, by shewing that he whom she loved was a scholar.

“ While I was thus engaged, my attention was caught by a singular phenomenon: the grounds on which the window where I sat opened were nearly covered with wood, and sloped gradually towards a lake, which, winding a considerable way through the country, formed, on one side, the boundary of the baron’s park; the grounds that lay beyond were also his, to a considerable distance, and were, for the most part, underwood likewise.

“ Absorbed in thought, my eye wandered carelessly over the landscape, when I thought I observed a faint gleam as of lightning at a little distance from the farthest bank of the lake, where the trees stood particularly close; it was, however, but of an instant’s duration, and the darkness continuing for some little time unbroken, I began to think that it was merely the effect of fancy, when a second gleam, more vivid than the first, convinced me of my error. Again the darkness returned, and again and again it was dispelled; at intervals the flashes succeeded one another

quicker and quicker, and I thought that I could see strange shapes flit in their glare, and sometimes weak, faint cries, I could have sworn, reached my ear.

“ Still I endeavoured to persuade myself that it was lightning, and that the mournful musings with which I had been busy had prepared my imagination to strain for sound and shape, that had no substantial existence: I felt myself, however, chained to the window, by a curiosity mingled with awe, that belied my theory.

“ The flashes continued for about a quarter of an hour, and a considerable interval of uninterrupted darkness having induced me to think that they would not recur, whatever might have been the cause of them, I was about to close the casement, and go to bed, although my mind was still filled with the strangeness of the circumstance, when giving one glance more towards the spot, I observed a kind of faint, bluish light, such as one might suppose a number of glowworms to yield, if collected in one spot, issue from amidst the

trees that overhung the lake, and glide across the water.

“ I lost sight of it as it came beneath the hither bank, but almost immediately after, a luminous mist, which I judged to proceed from it, whatever it might be, was visible above the tops of the trees. This glided on, in a straight line, towards a mount, that had been raised by art, at no great distance from the castle, in order to afford to those who might choose to view the grounds a more extensive prospect of the adjacent country.

“ This line was occasionally crossed by pasture and tillage grounds, formed sometimes by deep moats, filled with water, and sometimes by almost impervious hedges of holm, oak, briar, and holly; and in one place in particular, it was intersected by the extremity of an enclosure for deer, that was surrounded by a very high wall.

“ I watched anxiously, with my eye directed to the first place that was clear of trees, hoping that when the mist reached

it (for it continued to move slowly on), I should be able to distinguish what the substance might be from which it emanated. It appeared at length, but I could discern in it nothing but a vapour, denser towards the ground, rarifying as it rose into the atmosphere, and impregnated with some luminous matter. It continued still to advance, without deviating from a straight line, passing at an even rate of progress.

“I conceived that it might be some marshy exhalation, such as it is said bewilders the nocturnal traveller; and I expected that as soon as it reached the high wall of the deer-park, that it would be broken and dispersed.

“In this I was mistaken; it advanced beneath it, faintly dispelling the darker mass of shade flung from its height, and just revealing to the eye a massy buttress, by which it was supported; then, for an instant, all was dark, and I thought my conjecture verified, when, to my utter astonishment, and, indeed, I wont deny, con-

sternation, I saw it burst, as it were, from the side of the wall next me, and continue its progress across the park.

“I could perceive distinctly that a herd of deer, that were couched at a considerable distance, as soon as they perceived it, rose suddenly, and bounded away, as if pursued by hounds. The night was so calm, that I could hear the tumult of their flight; it soon stopped for a moment, during which I supposed they had turned to look on the object that had alarmed them, for it was immediately renewed, and was gradually lost to the ear as they gained a remoter part of the park.

“The vapour, or the spirit, still moved on, passing the hither, in the same manner as it had done the farther part of the wall; and at length, having reached the mount I before mentioned, it rested on it.

“I felt my limbs by that time all bedewed with a cold sweat; but it appeared as if some unknown power had rivetted my body to the spot where I sat, and my eye on the spectre.

“ I again and again anxiously explored every part of the mist; and I at length thought that I could discern in its centre the faint outline of a human figure.

“ While I was still endeavouring to ascertain whether this was or was not more than an illusion of the fancy, I chanced to turn my eye again towards the lake, possibly expecting the appearance of another undefined form, when I perceived a boat slowly emerge from the shade of the hither bank, and, dropping down along it for a little way, pass to the other side.

“ This was a circumstance little less calculated to excite my wonder than the vapour itself. You will not be surprised at that, when I tell you, that, to my certain knowledge, there was but one boat on the whole lake; and that, having had it out for the purpose of fishing, I had myself, a little before nightfall, locked it to a tree, just at the point where that before mentioned became visible, and I had the key still in my pocket; still it was not impossible that some accident might have snap-

ped the chain at her bow, and allowed her to drift ; but another circumstance that I observed, just as I had formed this conjecture, satisfied me that it was an effort to assert the empire of reason quite useless.

“ I know not how it happened, that in the perturbed state in which my mind then was, my eye glancing from the mount to the lake, and the lake to the mount, I was capable of reasoning at all ; but a man of learning is extremely unwilling to put himself on a level with simple hinds in his perceptions of extra-mundane affairs, and I was extremely anxious to find a natural cause for the strange things that were passing before my eyes, the evidence of which, had it been possible, I would willingly have discredited. The circumstance to which I allude was this ; there was no perceptible current in the lake, and what little wind there was, blew in a direction exactly opposite to the course which the boat took, so that her progress certainly could not have been the result of accident, whatever



might have caused her to be loosed from her moorings.

“ A very short time after I had lost sight of her in the darkness of the opposite bank, listening still with deep attention, indeed having every faculty of soul and body stretched to most painful tension, with anxious expectation of what all this might end in, I distinctly heard the splash of a paddle, and soon afterwards the boat reappeared, but no longer without a *visible* guide.

“ A dark, loose-robed, and gigantic figure stood at her stern, and drove her rapidly towards the spot where she had proceeded, I was now fain to believe, self-moved, in obedience to his call.

“ She was soon again concealed from my view, and shortly afterwards I heard the paddle thrown across the bushes, and the loud dash of her prow against the waters, occasioned by the stepping on shore of whoever had navigated her. Then the deep, unbroken silence of night returned.

The luminous mist stood motionless on the mount.

“ As I gazed on it, my perturbation and astonishment increased every moment, and I was debating with myself whether I should not steal gently down, and, awakening some of the domestics, share my feelings with them, or perhaps engage some of them to assist me in an endeavour to ascertain what the strange appearance might be, when a light suddenly streamed upon the shrubs and trees to the right, and while I was just beginning to form conjectures as to whence it could proceed, a figure, bearing a dark lanthorn, turned round an angle of the building, and passed along the walls towards where I was.

“ At first this circumstance increased my alarm, prone as I was to blend every occurrence with the extraordinary visions with which my mind was engrossed ; but while I was just in the act of drawing in my head, to elude observation, I recollected that one of the baron's grooms always slept in a loft over the stables, which lay at some distance

from the castle, on the western side—that this person had been absent all day, and that, as I had crossed the great hall, on my way up stairs, I had heard the porter complain of his remaining out so long, as he should have to stay up and let him in, in order that he might get his supper.

“ This man and I, though we occupied different ranks in the baron’s service, had contracted some degree of intimacy, from that chief source of friendship, mutual utility: he had been accustomed to perform for me several little menial offices, and I, in return, wrote letters for him to his mistress and friends; and had once, when he was about to be discharged for remissness in his duty, employed successfully what little influence I had with the baron, through my principal, to obtain his pardon.

“ Those only who have laboured under the impression, at the dark and silent hour of midnight, that they are beholding the mystic arts of disembodied spirits, and those who hold forbidden and unhallowed converse with them, and have, the while, no

human being at hand to share their inquietude, such only can imagine the degree of satisfaction I felt at the approach of one with whom I had oftentimes held familiar converse.

“As the man advanced, I was much pleased to find that I was not deceived in my conjecture; and I thought I could perceive, by a certain caution and timidity that was visible in his manner, that he had discerned the chief object of my alarm, for he frequently looked in among the trees, holding the lanthorn above his head, and sometimes started, and then paused, like one whose alarmed fancy catches danger in every common and gentle sound.

“I waited till he came beneath the window, and then called in a low voice—‘Francis!’ but he no sooner heard his name uttered, than he let the lanthorn fall, and, dropping on his knees, began to pray aloud. I called again, but his teeth chattered, and he prayed in a louder tone.

“I feared he might wake the baron by

the fervency of his devotion, and repeated my call, adding, in a peevish tone—‘How can you be so stupid?’

‘Stupid I have been,’ said he, ‘and sinner I have been, no doubt; but if I am spared only for——’

‘Why, Francis!’

‘Oh, mercy, mercy!’

‘Why, Francis, don’t you know me?—don’t you know Herman Largen?’

“His terror seemed a little to subside; he looked up, and saw me leaning out of the window; but he could, for some time, scarcely believe that it was indeed the voice of a man he had heard: he remained on his knees, and wiped the sweat off his forehead with the flap of his cloak; at length, having recovered himself, he asked me how I could frighten him so? I assured him I had no intention to do more than share with him the fright I felt myself, and asked him whether he had seen the light upon the mount?”

‘No; what mount?’

‘Why, yonder, to the right of the stables.’

“He looked towards it, holding up the lanthorn; he could see nothing.

“I conjectured that it was now, and had been, rendered invisible to him by the glare of the lanthorn; and indeed I could now see it but dimly myself; I desired him, therefore, to cover the lanthorn with his cloak.

“He did so, and then distinguishing the vision, he was on the point of relapsing into the terror which he had before experienced. The presence, however, of a human being enabled him in some degree to master his feelings, and he even summoned courage enough to examine attentively the vague and extraordinary shape.

“I asked him whether something had not alarmed him before?

‘Holy Virgin! master Herman,’ he replied, ‘this is not the first evil thing I have seen to-night.’

‘What have you seen?’

‘Are you sure the baron is asleep?’ said he, in a half-whisper.

‘Quite sure,’ replied I; ‘and will remain so, if you do not raise your voice higher than that pitch.’

‘That you may be sure I wont,’ said he; ‘for what I have to tell you, if you chuse to hear it, I would not, for the best horse in his stables, that he should hear ten words of—but what do you think that light may be?’

‘I know not; but it is probable’ (I knew that he had to pass, on his return from the place where he had been, close by the spot in the wood where I had first seen the lightning) ‘it is probable that what you have to communicate may enable me to form some feasible conjecture with respect to it.’

‘I was sorry,’ continued Francis, ‘not to find you up when I came in; for as I know you have a great deal of learning, I thought you might have been able to direct me for the best, as to the use I should make of the wonderful things that have come to my knowledge. It all relates to the baron—hush! isn’t he stirring?’

‘No; but I thought I heard a rustling beyond the paling by which that new plan-

tation is inclosed ; but now I recollect' (I was afraid of alarming him, and thus disappointing the curiosity he had awakened) 'I recollect,' added I, 'that the housekeeper's daughter turned her little favourite fawn into the grounds this evening ; it is probably it that is browsing branches of the young trees where they project over the fence.'

"We both listened anxiously, for I was by no means satisfied with my own method of accounting for the sound ; but all was still.

'I know not,' said Francis, 'whether I can tell you very distinctly what I have been witness to, for I was so terrified, that I almost lost my senses ; and now how do I know what that dim blue light may be ? I'm sure it is as like a blaze out of the devil's own cauldron as any thing I ever saw in my life. But any thing's better than going to lie in the loft by myself. I wanted Heinrich to let me lie on one of the benches in the hall ; but he was surly because I had



Kept him up, and swore he'd tell the baron if I left the stables without any one to take care of them. But as I have fortunately found you to talk to, I shall remain here till cock-crow at least, after which, they say, no spirits can walk. Well, you know where I was to-day ?'

' Yes, you told me in the morning you were going to see your sweetheart.'

' True, Lord love her! and a pleasant day I spent with her too ; I little thought, Heaven help me! that it would be followed by such a night ! Well, I staid longer than I should have done, sure enough, for when I was coming away, I was quite surprised to find it was so late, and I knew it would be dark before I could get even to the entrance of the wood, and that I should have to pass the whole of it by night, which was a thing I didn't by any means like, for you know what was said to have happened to the baron in it this time twelve months ago.'

' I know nothing about what happened to the baron,' said I.

‘Why, then, you are the only person in the castle ignorant of it. Let me see—I verily believe it was this—yes, it certainly was—very day; isn’t this the eve of Holy Thursday? yes, it was this very day that he and the Italian count, his nephew, that passes so much of his time with him, count Martinelli, walked out into the wood after dinner.”

Edward felt all his faculties roused by the mention of this name, with which the fatal manuscript had brought him but too well acquainted, and listened with more forcibly-aroused interest to a narration that he had now hopes would throw some light upon the dark and stormy clouds in which the prospects of his future life were enwrapt.

He felt himself most painfully disappointed, when the narrator continued as follows, still speaking in the person of the groom—“But I can tell you this afterwards—let me first relate what I saw to-night.

‘I got safe enough through the wood,

though, to say the truth, I started at the rustle of every leaf, till I came to that part of the road where, as you know, the stream that falls into the lake is fordable, and you can, by wading through it, shorten your way very much ;' (this place was within about a quarter of a mile of that where I had seen the lightning).

' As the evening was warm, I stript off my lower garments, and passed over, for to say the truth, I didn't much care how short I made the way ; and the turrets of the castle, that I could see quite plain rising above the trees, made me wish a hundred times that the water wasn't between me and them.

' Well, when I got over, I sat down on a stone by the bank of the riyulet, and was cleaning my feet from the sand before I should put on my clothes, when I thought I saw a light break through the trees, and gleam upon the surface of the lake. I looked again, and again I saw it. I was inclined to be pleased, for I thought it might be some boys out catching birds

with a lanthorn and net—a kind of sport which I had often partaken of myself in my younger days; and I felt that it would be a relief, after the uneasiness I had experienced ever since I had entered the wood, to hear the sound of a fellow-creature's voice. As soon, therefore, as I had put on my clothes, I made for the place from whence the light proceeded.

‘ You know the opening in the wood, at a little distance from the pathway, where there are the ruins of a small chapel, and near them two scathed oaks—I dare say, that from where you are, you can see the white stones of the belfry rising over the trees—that was the very spot. Hark! a plague upon that fawn! if it were not that I am afraid of quitting the spot I'm in, I'd go drive it further into the grounds—it's a pity to let it hurt the young plants.

‘ Well, as I drew nigh, I heard a noise that I first took to be made by the boys beating the bushes; but this soon stopped, and then I heard another noise—oh, the Holy Mother be about us! such a noise!

how I retained my senses when I heard it, and still more when I found what was the cause of it, I scarcely know—if that same fawn was in the Red Sea, it would be little matter.

“ The rustling sound, which had returned louder than before, had interrupted the narrative of Francis, who, as he thus angrily exclaimed against the fawn, snatched up his lanthorn, and throwing its light back along the castle-wall, immediately turned, and fled with precipitation towards the stables, but not till the gleam, however evanescent, had enabled me to discern the long shadow of a man cast from the base of a buttress that supported the wall of an outer court, beyond the angle of the building.

“ A sudden emotion of terror caused me to close the casement; but again curiosity predominating, I partially opened it, and stooping my head to a level with the sill, applied my ear to the aperture.

“ For a few moments all was silent, but then I thought I heard the sound of foot-

steps. I was not deceived. Two persons passed beneath, conversing in a low tone; and to something said by one, I could distinctly hear the other reply—‘No matter; the spell works; the boor cannot pass. If he witness it, he cannot live to tell it.’

“We are a good deal prone, in general, to apply to ourselves, when our passions are concerned, almost any thing that will admit of such application; and yet so infatuated was I by a thirst to gratify my curiosity, that I would not believe that I was designated by these words of mysterious and horrible import, but again threw the casement wide open, as soon as the footsteps, after echoing for a short time amidst the courts on the western side of the castle, had died away into silence.

“But though one feeling had got the better of another, it could not dispel it; and I awaited the issue in indescribable agitation. The sweat poured from every pore; and I was so weak, that I could not have stood had I not held by the window.

"It is natural to suppose, that when my corporal faculties were thus circumstanced, those of my mind were not altogether untrammelled in their operations; therefore I cannot take upon me to say how much or how little of what I am now going to relate was the work of a disordered fancy; that it was not all so you will find proof sufficient as I proceed."

Here the narrator paused, as if to collect courage to call before his own mind, and lay before that of others, circumstances which had so severely affected him when they occurred. He then continued, in a tone tremulous and more sunken than before—"The castle, which, together with other possessions, had descended to the baron through a long line of ancestors, had been fortified during the turbulent period when the fief was the great principle of law, and baronial contumacy, and baronial sway, the terror of the prince and the people.

"As the times had assumed a more peaceful complexion, the portcullis, the draw-

bridge, the moat, and the sometime pike-bristled redoubt, had given way to the unsentinelled portal and the ornamented lawn; but the edifice still bore marks of its original destination; and in the stillness of a summer's noon, when reposed in some green alcove, I have whiled away the sultry hour with some chivalrous legend, often has my fancy peopled its frowning battlements with steel-clad bands, the falchion glittering in their grasp, and the pennon streaming above their heads; and changed the cuckoo's note, the bleat of sheep, the whet of scythe, and other rural sounds, in the surrounding woodlands, for the murmur of the hostile camp, the neigh of many steeds, and the clangour of the war-trump.

“The baron had himself found work in the demolition of rampart, and the filling up of trench; but he had, when he had last given directions for the execution of works of this kind, ordered, at the instance of some noble visitors, who were admirers of



antiquity, that a tower of curious and elegant workmanship, which constituted the remains of a strong outwork, and which adjoined the court round which the stables ran, should be spared.

“ This was in sight of the window at which I stood, and nearly in a line between me and the mount, upon which the mist still stood motionless ; and I now saw rising from it a figure, which I concluded to be that of one of the persons who had passed beneath. For a short time it stood still, its head bent towards the earth. A low muttering then, methought, reached my ear ; and then a faint and distant peal of thunder ran along the horizon.

“ Presently the tower was wrapt in flame, and the surprise you experienced on witnessing the emotions I felt when, the other day, I saw this Sternheim, will cease when I tell you, that by the light of that flame I saw him, for the first time in my life—saw him ! yes—it was he himself who stood upon the summit of the solitary tower,

controlled the elements, and directed the vengeance of Heaven to the head of the guilty !

“ Good Heaven ! how terrible was his aspect ! his loose dark garment, and dishevelled hair, floated on the rising breeze ; and his haggard countenance, from which his dark eye flashed with all the wildness and fury of inspiration, was upturned to heaven, as he thrice waved the mystic wand of incantation.

“ Then all again was dark, and he stood quietly awaiting the effects of his power.

“ Again the thunder pealed, but no longer remote ; it seemed as if 'twere over head, and its crash shook every stone and plank of the edifice.

“ Again silence returned ; and now vivid corruscations began to shoot from the edges of the mist, that gradually brightened into flame, which opening wide, disclosed to my aching sense a human figure wrapt in the vestments of the grave, from whose breast a dark line was visible, that I supposed to be a stream of blood, marking the

wound through which life had issued from the body, the semblance of which the apparition wore.

“ Scarcely was the figure disengaged from the flame that had enwrapt it, when it glided forward towards the building with great rapidity, leaving behind it a fiery track, that threw a gleam, lurid indeed, but almost as strong as that of the noontide sun, upon tower, and buttress, and wood, and water. A rushing sound, as of winds long pent, escaping with sudden burst and tumultuous contest from mountain-caverns, accompanied its course.

“ I remained at the casement nearly in a state of stupefaction; but when the apparition had approached within about a stone’s throw of the castle’s walls, I felt myself suddenly assailed by a cold, dank, and noisome vapour, that by some mechanical effort of reason I was assured could not be long sustained by living thing, and I had just time, all trembling as I was with terror, and convulsions that I felt were writhing my frame, to close the casement, when L

reeled and fell to the ground, deprived of sense.

“How long I remained thus I know not; but I was aroused from my trance by the loud ringing of the baron’s bell.”

## CHAP. VI.

What groan was that I heard? deep groan indeed,

With heavy anguish laden! let me trace it—

From yonder bed it comes.

BLAIR:

“ I STARTED up, feeble as I felt myself, and made my way, as well as I was able, into his apartment. He was sitting, wrapt in his roquelaure, in an arm-chair by the side of the bed, which stood at the farther end of it, and seemed like one who was just recovering the effects of some dreadful agony of mind or body.

“ His countenance was pale and haggard, his frame seemed quite exhausted by the violence of his emotions, and he yet gasped for breath. On a table at which he had been writing before he had retired to rest, stood a lamp, which was shaded by a screen on that side of the room where I now stood, and the whole force of its light be-

ing thrown in the opposite direction, set his apparently conscience-tortured form full before my eye, while he had but an imperfect view of me.

“In the arras, against which the chair he occupied was placed, the fall of our first parents was wrought with exquisite skill. The high back of the chair concealed the figures of the outcasts from the delicious bowers in which they had tasted the sweets of an innocent existence, and that of the stern cherub who was executing the divine behest was alone visible. The flaming sword was brandished immediately over the head of the living culprit, for I had now but little doubt of the guilt which was imputed to him being justly imputed; and as I gazed, I almost expected to see the awful form start from the hangings, and seize his victim.

“The baron seemed gradually recovering, and at length, after straining his eye into the gloom in which I stood, made a signal to me to advance. I did so; but scarcely had I got within the light, when

some new emotion shook him. He started—stretched forth his hands with as much violence as the feeble state in which he was would permit him—his eyeballs rolled wildly—and he sunk back into his chair in strong convulsions.

“Believing him to be dying, and terrified lest I should be supposed to have been the cause of his death, I ran to a bell which communicated with the apartments of some of the domestics, and rang violently. No one came. The baron continued to work in strong convulsions. I seized the light, and went to seek assistance.

“When I came to that part of the castle where the greater part of the domestics slept, I was surprised to find them all open and empty; not a soul was to be found. I called, but no sound was returned, save the echoes of my own voice, reverberated from the ceiling of the lobby where I stood, and the walls of the long galleries and corridors that branched from it, and the ticking of the great clock that stood in the hall below.

“ My perturbation and alarm increased. I feared that all the malign influences of earth and hell had conspired for my ruin. But while I anxiously listened for some sound which might direct me to where I should find some human being to whom I might communicate my feelings, I thought I heard a door violently shut to, in a remote part of the edifice. I immediately descended to the hall, and took the avenue from it that led in the direction from which the sound had appeared to proceed.

“ As I passed on with quick and silent steps, a light streamed feebly from beneath a door to the right. Advancing further, a voice, engaged in some solemn and earnest narration, was distinguishable within. I pushed the door gently open. There was no one in the room into which it led; but in an inner apartment, the door of which lay open, I found almost all the domestics of the family, half-dressed, and close crowded round one of their fellows, who was in the act of communicating some



strange intelligence, while the sound even of his own voice seemed to fill him with distrust and alarm.

“ The backs of the auditors being turned towards me as I entered, they did not perceive me ; but the narrator, as soon as he caught the first glimpse of my figure, exhibited all the symptoms of a terror wrought almost to madness. His countenance had been sufficiently pale before ; but an ashy hue, like that of death, now got possession of it ; his lips quivered—his eyes started wildly from their sockets ; and to various questions as to what ailed him, while the inquirers did not dare look behind them for the cause, he only answered by pointing to me, and repeating the monosyllable ‘ There ! there ! ’

“ His companions at length, as if by one accord, summoned courage to look for the cause of his alarm ; but no sooner had they set eyes on me, than with a simultaneous rush and scream, they all retired to the farther corner of the room.

“ I knew not what to make of the scene,

and was scarcely less terrified myself than the persons to whom I seemed to be an object of horror ; but having gazed on them for some time in mute wonder, while one stretched forth his arms in a supplicating attitude—another knelt and prayed aloud—and a third covered his face with his hands, I at length bethought me of examining my own person ; and I then soon found a means of accounting for the terror which I had inflicted.

“ When I had fallen from the window, I had received a cut on my forehead from the corner of a marble table that stood near ; and my body being supported in an upright posture by the foot of it, the blood had trickled down my face, and fallen on the breast of a white night-robe ; for which, when I had retired to my apartment, the heat of the evening, had induced me to change my doublet.

“ I was several minutes before I could dispel the fright I had occasioned in any of the persons who faced me in their several most ludicrous attitudes of supplica-

of devastation, such as the oldest among them had never witnessed.

“ But no such scene appeared—not an oak was dismantled of a single branch—not a pinnacle or vane of the edifice was touched with the forked flame ; but all was calm and reposing, as if good angels had hovered all night over the mansion. The early breeze came fraught with the perfume of the garden and the hayfield—the herbage beneath, and the foliage above, presented a green freshened by the dews of heaven—the sheep were rising from their lairs, and shaking the moisture from their fleeces, while now and then a low bleat was answered from a neighbouring hillock—a mist was rising from the lake, and rolling its wreathed volumes on its surface, over which, as I firmly believed, the fires of hell had glided but a few hours before; and already from the red chimnies of a hamlet that peeped from among the trees on the highlands beyond, the smoke had begun to ascend.

" All that could be seen spoke of peace; and we withdrew, each to find within ourselves, in the perturbed rest of the morning hour, the horrors for which our imaginations were prepared, experiencing, as we did, only disappointment from the smiling images that without presented themselves to our view.

" I know not how the others fared, but *my* fancy was busy enough; and though I slept many hours, I awoke but little refreshed.

" When I rose, there was no lack of food adapted to that taste for the horrible which I had imbibed. The first thing I heard was, that the groom with whom I had conversed in the night had been found dead by the stable-door, which it appeared he had been endeavouring to open with a wrong key, that he had drawn from his pocket in a mistake, arising, probably, from the perturbed state of his mind at the time; and another domestic, who slept in one of the upper chambers of the castle, had also

yielded his breath, reclined against the open window, through which he had contemplated forbidden things.

The baron was still in bed and unwell, but he had been extremely anxious in his inquiries as to what was known of the occurrences of the night; and on learning that the man whom I had so dreadfully frightened had been a beholder of a part, if not the whole of them, he had immediately ordered him, notwithstanding the state in which he was, for he remained very ill, though he had recovered his senses, to be conveyed to the keep of the castle, and had sent to the nearest garrison for three file of soldiers, to do duty as a guard on him.

While this was all passing, he had directed that I should not be disturbed, and that, when I rose, no one should mention it to me, but that I should be immediately sent to him. Fortunately his mandates were not strictly obeyed—a female of the household, who entertained a friendship for me, suspecting that some evil was designed

against me, put me on my guard ; but as I knew that the baron must remember the appearance I had made in the night, and would, in consequence, believe that I had witnessed more than he wished, I came in to his presence with a palpitating heart, quite certain that I should be conveyed from it to the keep, as a companion for the loquacious person who already tenanted it. I was agreeably surprised, however, to find that he was quite unconscious of my having had any share in producing his sufferings, confounding my appearance with whatever vision had before disturbed him, and merely apprehending that I had been awake, and curious to witness the effects of a thunder-storm.

“ I, of course, framed my answers so as to confirm his error, satisfied him that I had been fast asleep at the time of the thunder, and left his chamber, blessing myself for the salutary taciturnity which I had before observed, which had preserved me from the keep, and which I ever had had

the prudence and foresight to aid in its utility, by an assurance, that the cut in my forehead had been the result of the haste with which I had got out of bed in the dark, when the bell rang.

“At the same time that the baron had sent for the soldiers, he had also sent for a surgeon to examine the bodies of the two men who had been so unaccountably deprived of life, and had dispatched a courier in quest of the secretary, with injunctions to use all possible speed.

“The soldiers and surgeon came in the course of the day; and the latter having opened and accurately inspected the bodies, declared himself wholly unable to assign any cause of death. I asked him, when he made this declaration, in the baron’s apartment, whether it might not have been the effect of some noisome vapour? He replied in the negative.

“The baron cast a glance towards me, indicative of distrust and alarm, when I asked the question; and suddenly recollecting the imprudence of which I had been

guilty, I added—‘What induced me to make the inquiry was, that—’ I was about to assign some fictitious motive, when the baron interrupted me, frowning, and in an angry tone desired me to leave the room.

“I withdrew, with renewed apprehension of the *keep*; but, fortunately, if I was even suspected of knowing more than I should, it was perhaps thought that my services might be wanted, or whatever else might be the cause, I escaped.

“It was not, however, till the ensuing day, that I felt my apprehensions sufficiently dispelled to permit of my thinking of any other subject; but when I then rose, and heard there were no orders for my confinement, my curiosity returned in full force, and I set about gratifying it, to what extent it was in my power, with all possible diligence.

“I re-examined the bodies, and as far as my own knowledge with regard to such matters extended, I had reason to believe the declaration of the surgeon well founded; so that I was compelled to believe that



it was what each of the men had beheld that had occasioned their death, and that an early suspension of sense had saved me from a similar fate, as well as the unfortunate prisoner, who subsequently informed me that he had swooned about the same time.

“ I was still at a loss to account for the means by which the baron, for whose senses I was persuaded the vision was intended, should have escaped; but concluded that he had been supplied, on that very account, with preternatural ability to support it, for a time at least; that he could ultimately bear up against its influence, there was no reason to believe, for the surgeon, before he left the castle, gave some intimation to one of the upper domestics, that he despaired of his life, though he himself did not think he was in danger, or if he did, thought proper to keep his opinion to himself.

“ As he continued, however, confined to his room, I had ample leisure to pursue my researches; I inquired of several of the

servants with respect to the transactions in the wood, of which the groom had spoken, but could obtain no satisfactory account of them; all I could learn with certainty was, that, about a year before, the baron, his nephew, his confessor, and the secretary, my principal, having walked into the wood beyond the lake one evening, had been observed, by one of the servants of the castle, to issue suddenly, and apparently in great perturbation, from the thickets on the further bank, and after running backward and forward for a few seconds on the margin, at length, as if their passage on both sides was cut off, by some invisible power, plunge all at once into the water, and seek the hither shore. Three of them got over in safety, but the confessor being but an indifferent swimmer, would have been drowned, had not the others, after they had landed themselves, rowed out a boat which happened to be moored hard by, and picked him up.

“ They all came up dripping wet; and as they ordered dry clothes to be prepared.

for them, the baron said, with a forced smile, that they had swam across for a wager, dressed as they were; but there was no smile seen on the countenance of any of the four, my informant added, for many days afterwards; and the sole witness of the transaction having been indiscreet enough to mention it, his tale had cost him dear, for it having come to the baron's ear, he had suddenly disappeared, no soul knowing what had become of him.

"Many pretended to give a full account of the whole mysterious transaction, with airs of importance, and many solemn injunctions to secrecy; but as no two accounts had the least resemblance, and each was more monstrous than the first, I was compelled to consider them all as fabulous, considering, moreover, that their absurdity, rather than the discretion of the persons to whom they were confided, must have been safeguards to their primitive unfoldings from the baron's resentment.

"I now proceeded to examine the track of the luminous column that had ascended

from the lake; wherever it had passed, the grass and the foliage of the trees was burnt up, and even the park wall was discoloured, for a wide space, on that part through which I had seen it glide.

“ When I reached the margin of the lake, I found the boat locked as I had left her, and as if she had not been moved from the spot; I loosed her, and passed over to the place where I had first seen the spectre—there the effect of the fires that wrapped it, upon the trees and herbage, was also visible.

“ As I examined, with much attention, the open space in the wood over which I had first seen the lightning, and which I supposed to have been the scene of incantation, a circumstance that occurred gave me reason to believe that my conjecture was well grounded, for a little dog, which had followed me from the castle, having attracted my attention, by yelping and scratching the ground with his paws, I went to see what he was about, and found him sometimes pulling with his teeth at the

corner of a cloth that was fast in the ground, and sometimes scratching the earth away from it, to enable him the more easily to get it out.

“ On assisting his efforts with a stick I had in my hand, I found that the sod, for about two feet square, was loose, but fitted so neatly to that from which it had been apparently separated, that the eye could scarcely discern the cut, and having removed it, a cloth appeared concealed beneath, which, on unfolding, I found to contain a death's-head and cross-bones, a book, written in characters with which I was unacquainted, several instruments of which I could not conceive the use, three vials of different-coloured liquids, three powders also of various colours, made up in silver cases of curious and antique workmanship, and seven wax tapers, with richly embossed stands also of silver.

“ Whatever desire I might have felt to carry away this extraordinary package, I dared not, after what I had seen of the power of the owner; and having carefully

covered them up, I left them as I had found them, and returned to the castle.

"As I was just about to enter my apartment, the secretary, who had returned in my absence, issued suddenly from that of the baron, with whom, as I afterwards understood, he had had a private conference, that had lasted for more than an hour.

"He had ridden all night, and bore all the marks of extreme fatigue; but of this he did not seem conscious, while his whole soul appeared engrossed by some communication which had probably been just made to him. His eyes were wild and bloodshot; his nether lip, all livid and quivering, formed a terrible harmony of colouring with the ashy paleness of his countenance; and his accents, hollow and struggling for vent, like those of a man who has received a summons to immediate death, scarcely enabled him to communicate a knowledge of what he wanted.

"While he spoke, he hurried up and down the room, now taking up one thing, and then another, and successively throw-

ing them down, as he perceived that he did not want them ; at last, understanding that he wanted a horse to be got ready immediately, in order that he might go in quest of Martinelli, I went down to order one ; as soon as it was ready, he threw himself on it, and having directed me to search for a box of papers, in a secret place where he had deposited it, and to give it into the baron's hands as soon as I had found it, he set off, crossing the lawn at a full gallop, and in an instant disappearing in the woods beyond.

“ As soon as he was gone, I went to search for the box, and having found it, carried it to the baron, who seized it with an eagerness in which there appeared something like satisfaction, if I could judge by the fire that seemed to relume his half-quenched eye, and the smile that dressed his haggard and yellow countenance. He directed me, in a hurried manner, to open a cabinet that stood on a dressing-table at a little distance, and give him a key that was lying in one of its drawers.

"I did so; he opened the box, with a trembling hand, and, snatching out the papers it contained, ran his eye over several, and then his faculties seemed to become completely absorbed in the perusal of one of them.

"While he was thus occupied, I stood by, not knowing whether to retire, or await his orders to do so, and my eye chancing to rest on one of the papers he had laid down on the bed, the writing on which was in plain, large characters, some words of most horrible import fixing my attention, I read mechanically, and, as it were, before I could stop myself, to where a double of the sheet concealed the text; thus checked, I became conscious of the meanness I had been guilty of; and though I believe I might have read the whole without being observed, so deeply was the baron absorbed in the perusal of that he held in his hand, I made no attempt to satisfy my curiosity, strongly as it was excited, but stood, while I waited for orders to



leave the room, examining the changes in the baron's countenance.

“The last gleam of the evening's sun shot into the chamber, from beneath the dark drapery of a window at some distance, and falling full upon his person, as he sat up in his bed, enabled me more clearly to discern the workings of his mind: an eager hope now flushed his sunken cheek with a faint red, that faded in a moment into the paleness of disappointment—again it rose, again it fell—sometimes he sighed deeply, and sometimes he gnashed his teeth; at length his countenance was for several minutes unmoved, his eyes fixed upon vacancy; he seemed like one whose faculties were suddenly arrested, and his substance changed to marble; then a hollow groan heaved his breast; he laid down the paper with a gentleness that seemed the terrible quiet of despair, and exclaimed—‘It's even so! the last ray of hope is dispelled! it is Martinelli, the partner of my guilt, alone that the sorcerer is interested to save!’

there is no restraining principle which may prevent him, if such were his power, from giving additional effect to the decrees of Providence ! But what have I lost ?' he added, as if with sudden recollection ; ' fool ! fool ! could I for a moment suppose that his power extended to the thwarting of those ?' Again his countenance became fixed, and he mused deeply ; then awaking, as if from a dream, he turned round, and seeming surprised to see me standing by, he asked me angrily what I wanted ? I replied, stammering, that I awaited his permission to retire.

' Wretch !' said he, in a terrific tone, while his countenance was covered with a paleness more cadaverous than before, and his form seemed to recover strength, and to dilate in the consciousness of it, in order to crush me, like some noxious reptile that had crossed his path, ' wretch, how dared you to obtrude yourself upon my griefs ?' I every moment expected that he would follow up this question by ordering me to ring for persons to convey me to the

keep ; but all at once his passions seemed to take another turn ; his head sunk upon his breast. I thought the gesture indicated an abandonment of the world, with its passions and its business. He waved his hand for me to be gone.

“I did not wait for a more explicit command, but made a speedy retreat to my own apartment. As soon as I reached it, I flung open the window, gazed upon the silver-tipped clouds that yet gave the light of the day-star to the world, the deep-em-purpled mountains, with their long-withdrawing vales, and the waving woods that clothed the plains beneath with summer’s richest verdure—listened with delight to the sweet warbling of the birds, and the carol of a peasant, who, at some distance, was arranging the vases which contained the plants of an orangery, that, partially open, sent a rich stream of fragrance through the atmosphere ; I contrasted the feelings of the happy man with those I had just witnessed—again cast my eye over the pleasant landscape, and thought I could

enjoy it, though the dart of death was raised against me: I felt the value of a guiltless spirit, and wept with joy to think I possessed it.

## CHAP. VII.

Ω τυχὸς ὄψις ἐμφανὲς εὐπατίων  
 Ως κάρτα μοι λαφῶς ἐδηλωσας κακά.

ÆSCHYLUS.

.....

On such sports,  
 Their feelings center'd in the joy of sight,  
 The multitude stood gazing, when a man,  
 Breathless, and with broad eyes, came running on,  
 His pale lips trembling, and his bloodless cheek,  
 Like one who meets a lion in his path. SOUTHEY.

“THE preparations still continued for the *fête*; but though the baron's health was so far improved, in the course of a day or two, that he was able to walk out, still his mind seemed as diseased as ever, and he was continually wandering, with his eyes fixed upon the ground, and apparently wrapped in deep thought, through the most retired and solitary part of the

grounds, and seemed utterly unconscious of what was passing around him.

"The steward, who was a sensible man, and who clearly perceived that his lord was in no condition to receive company, held a consultation of the household, in which he proposed that some person should be deputed to represent to him the expediency of withdrawing the invitations; but this was opposed by the confessor, as being likely to confirm, he said, the strange and absurd reports that had got into circulation through the country; and after some dispute upon the subject, this opinion prevailed, I believe, because the most of us were disinclined to give up the pleasures of the *fête*, after having been so long in expectation of them. The preparations accordingly went on, but the baron never went near the workmen; and somehow or another, though we were unwilling to lose the expected pleasure, the relish for it seemed to have been destroyed. Instead of the quips, and cranks, and jollity that used to mingle with the sound of the plane,

and the saw, and the hammer, as soon as the men set to work in the morning, their first inquiry of each other was, as to what had been seen or heard the preceding night? and there was seldom wanting some one to enhance, by imaginary wonders, the feeling of awe that seemed to pervade them.

“ To this succeeded tales of murders and apparitions innumerable ; and if any of them staid till after dusk, they would not cross the woods to their respective habitations but in companies of three and four together.

“ The work was often suspended, while some suggestion of grave import was delivered in a low and cautious tone; that was sure to draw forth many a significant wink and nod from the auditors ; and even the neighbouring gentry, when they came to see the preparations, spent much more of their time in inquiries, from the person who shewed them, concerning the late occurrences, than in noting draperies, and balconies, and awnings, and transparent paintings.

“ At length the day arrived, and was ushered in by the ringing of bells and the firing of cannon ; a number of old pieces of artillery, which had formerly served to defend the castle, having been drawn forth from the lumber-room, where they had long slumbered, were cleaned, and placed behind a parapet of the edifice for the purpose.

“ The confessor had had much private conversation with the baron the preceding day, and to his pious exhortations it was generally attributed that he had resumed, or had appeared to resume, some degree of serenity of mind ; he received the company with a certain degree of cheerfulness ; and when they had all arrived, and were scattered through the grounds, he seemed to derive some little pleasure from examining the various groups of maskers, as they commenced their freaks and revelries.

“ For some little time it appeared as if the rumours which had got abroad would have begotten a degree of gravity in the assembly but little suited to the occasion,



but the scene was not calculated to encourage such a feeling, and it was soon dispelled. It was a lovely evening—the sun, now fast declining in the west, cast a mildly-sweet radiance among the stems and foliage of the lofty trees, that threw their shadows in long lines and chequered masses, the coolness of which, even at that advanced period of the day, was grateful, across the close-shorn lawns; bands of music, stationed in various parts of the grounds, were already mingling their harmony, of more cunning contrivance, with the wild warblings of the feathered choristers; vases of the finest flowers were tastefully disposed amidst the trees and shrubs, in such profusion, as to fill the whole atmosphere with a delicious fragrance, so that your sense, as you sauntered along, was now saturated with the rich though homely odour of the wallflower, now with the costly perfume of the myrtle and geranium; festoons of roses and anemonies, which bore up lamps of various colours, were suspended from tree to tree, and pavilions and awnings were raised at

Intervals, containing rustic seats and tables, upon which were placed fruits, sherbet, ices, and other refreshments.

As the maskers were scattered through the grounds, some in careless ramble, some preluding to the dance, and some of the younger engaged in sportive chase of each other round the trees and through the bushes, their spangled and gaudy habits now merged in shade, and now suddenly enriching, with various colour and reflected gleam, the slanting sunbeam, gave animation to the scene; while below a squadron of light skiffs, gay with flags and streamers, starting from beneath the bank that had concealed them from view, shot in rapid race athwart the blue surface of the lake. It was altogether a scene that one would have supposed might defy the ingress of a darker influence: but the joys of man may not check the hand of Omnipotence, when raised to try the innocent or chastise the guilty; wielded by that hand, the storm whelms, in the nightly surge, the shrieking mariner, and the plume-tossing host tram-

ple the body of the prostrate warrior ; but not less rapid or violent than the mountain wave or the careering squadron is the fell disease, or, haply, mandate of imperial sway, that drags the voluptuary from the illuminated saloon or gorgeous alcove.

“ Since the night that I had beheld, as I believed, things not of human ken, my spirits had been greatly depressed, not that I grieved for the ill that I imagined impended over the baron and his house, for, in good sooth, he was little loved ; but a presage, which is even now strong in my mind, that some great calamity would, one time or another, be to myself the result of the perhaps sacrilegious curiosity I had indulged, had taken possession of me, and though I sometimes endeavoured to shake it off, and persuade myself that the impulse had been natural and blameless, still there were times when it would impart a murky hue to my thoughts for many hours together. It had yielded, however, completely to the influence of the present scenes, and the demons, and sorcerers, and

all the images of torture, and ruin, and death, that had swam in confused and horrible groupings before my fancy, began to give place to more joyous imaginings.

“Night fell, but the brilliancy of the festival augmented; temples, and arches, and columns of light, rose with the quickness of magic on the eye—flights of rockets, occasionally thrown into the atmosphere, shed around a radiance, though fleeting, almost as bright as that of day—and strains of delicious music, heard from various points invited to the song, and the dance. Still the fullest light that puny man can throw athwart this sublunary scene, is but a faint substitute for the majestic sun, and rouses the spirits of man, dispelling images of duskier semblance, with but contracted influence.

“As the shades grew denser and denser, and at length a dark horizon encircled the little sphere of splendor in which we moved, some recollection of the whispered horrors that had recently occupied the same,

seemed to steal over the spirits of the company ; but this was soon dispelled by the joyous shouts that rose into the firmament, as each edifice or shower of flame successively met the eye, but chiefly by the disappointment of expectation ; for when man dreads an evil, or hopes a good, if it does not soon appear, he becomes weary of looking for it.

“ I now wandered about, amusing myself with the antics of harlequins and punchinelloes—the graceful attitudes of white-handed milkmaids—the warblings of ballad-singers, fraught with the science of the professor—and the rural dance round the great oak, wherein the arched arm, flexile thigh, and pointed toe, that touched, not pressed, the sward, belied the village habiliments of the group.

“ I had been some time occupied in this way, when at length observing something like a pause in the mirth of a party near which I then happened to be standing, and that their eyes were every now and then directed to some object behind me,

I turned round, to see what it might be, and observed a tall figure, habited like a disciple of Zoroaster, standing close to me. I shrunk, I knew not why, from him, unless my perturbation arose from the awe with which he seemed to have inspired others, and a minute or two had elapsed before I could recover myself sufficiently to examine him with attention. His robe was plain, but of the finest materials, and the girdle which confined its folds was fastened by a stud formed of a single diamond of enormous size, and of so dazzling and rich a brilliancy, that the least informed in those matters could scarcely have mistaken it for a false gem, though to have admitted it to be a real one, was to have admitted the wealth of the possessor to be greater than that of almost any monarch in Europe; and yet another rose from the centre of his cap still larger, and fashioned into the shape of a flame, the symbol of the worship enjoined by the Zendavesta; the clasps of his sandals were of the same

material, and a wand which he held in his hand was tipped with a ruby, also formed into the magian symbol, and which, whenever it was moved, however gently, seemed to emit a living flame. Whether it was the extraordinary value of his ornaments, or some secret influence, I know not, though I have been since assured by many persons, that they had felt a certain heaviness creep over their spirits before they had perceived him; certain it is, that I felt all the gloom that had before shrouded my mind, return in full force. The stranger, from that moment, absorbed all my attention, and the gaudy pageant that surrounded me was as nothing.

“He moved slowly from group to group, and wherever he came, I perceived the same effect that he had produced when I first saw him. His presence was soon bruited through the grounds, and produced very marked consequences. Many of the bands of music which had attracted dancers, now played, like Orpheus, to the trees, the harlequins gave over their gambols, the ballad-

singers their warblings, mountebanks the panegyric of their nostrums, and monks their sermons. There was nothing to be seen but small groups (for concealment of the mask obviated the assembling of crowds) engaged in close and earnest conversation; and it was soon plain that the attention of the whole company was as much diverted as my own from the entertainments of the evening. When the stranger's back was turned, a finger was often pointed towards him, and a head laid close to the ear of a bystander; the tumult of revelry was changed into a fearful pause of expectation; the music gradually ceased in every quarter; and the solemn silence that reigned around formed a strange contrast with the brilliancy of the decorations.

“The stranger walked quietly on, not seeming to notice the effects his presence had produced. I followed him as closely as I could, without risking being observed by him, determined not to lose sight of him, if possible, for the remainder of the even-



ing, fully expecting that he was not there for nothing.

“ Use is the most effectual queller of fear. The stranger walked about without molesting any one. The attention of many was gradually withdrawn from him. Now and then, as I passed a group, I heard it audibly whispered, I suppose in allusion to the diamonds—‘ Oh, they are certainly false!’ again—‘ It’s some wag amusing himself at our expence;’ and then, with renewing courage, or the affectation of it, in a louder tone, ‘ I’m determined he shan’t spoil my sport.’ By degrees the amusements were resumed, though several still watched, and a few, like myself, of more adventurous curiosity, followed the *magus*.

“ A circumstance soon occurred that satisfied *me* that he was no ordinary masker.

“ In his various perambulations I observed that he once turned sharp upon his heel—a movement quite distinct from the general gravity of his step and demeanour. I observed this; and looking to see what

might have caused it, I saw the baron and the confessor standing at some little distance, engaged in deep conversation.

“The stranger walked slowly up to them, and stationing himself close behind, stood for some minutes motionless. I was near enough to perceive, that as he scowled on them, his eye, gleaming through the mask, assumed an expression of uncommon sternness and ferocity ; and whether it was fancy, or otherwise, I thought there was blended with that expression a savage exultation, growing out of the consciousness of approaching triumph.

“As this idea suggested itself to me, I felt a chillness creep through all my veins, and for a moment I involuntarily cast down my eye. When I again looked up, the baron was communicating something in a low tone to his companion, which had drawn forth a smile, that had in it something of hope, upon his haggard countenance, when suddenly a low and hollow murmur, that had in it nothing human, burst from the lips of the *magus*. Nothing

articulate reached my ear; but I should suppose that such was not the case with respect to the persons to whom whatever he said had been, in all probability, directed, for they shrunk as if a thunderbolt was descending from heaven to strike them, and turned suddenly round.

“I expected every instant that the earth would open, and swallow all of them, and was mechanically receding from the danger, with my face, however, still directed towards it, for I could not turn it away, when I observed that the actions of the baron and the confessor seemed to indicate that they were ignorant from whom the sound proceeded, though the mysterious stranger was not two paces removed from them; and they had first directed their inquiring looks towards the spot where he stood; but they appeared as if they had seen nothing, and they then cast anxious glances in every direction.

“At length I heard the baron say, in a low tone—‘Did you not hear it?’

‘As plain,’ replied the other, ‘as if the

terrible being had been standing close beside me.'

"The baron groaned, but said nothing; and they walked towards another part of the gardens, leaving me unable to account for their conduct, but by supposing that he who seemed to be their evil genius, though visible to others, was, by some preternatural agency, shrouded from their observation.

"He now resumed his perambulations, and I and some others followed at a slight distance, till he entered a clump of cypress, between which, and the other wooded parts of the grounds, there was no connection whatsoever. We stood for some time waiting, in the expectation that he would emerge; but he was no where to be seen. Curiosity gradually led some persons, in both directions, round the clump—nothing was visible, but an occasional gleam thrown by the torch of a passing lamplighter amidst the smooth boles and dark foliage of the cypress.

“ At length one more hardy than the rest, snatching himself a torch, rushed with a kind of mad determination amidst the trees, and whirling the flame about, explored every part of the clump; but there was nothing but a few small birds, that first scared by the light, fluttered around it, and then sought shelter in the higher branches.

“ Terror seemed now to quell every other emotion, and the persons who had followed the stranger gradually dropped off towards a more crowded and better lighted part of the grounds, so that when I awoke, as it were, from a long fit of thought, into which the occurrence had thrown me, I found myself alone, on the further side of the clump which separated me from the company. I started, and was about to move precipitately towards them, when I heard steps advancing rapidly behind me. I feared to look back, and quickened my pace. I then heard my name repeated, in a voice with the tones of which I was familiar. Presently I was overtaken by a mask habited as a Spanish soldier, who, tapping me on

the shoulder; asked me, in the squeaking voice usually adopted at masquerades, if I didn't know him? I had scarcely time to reply, when he pulled off his mask, and I discovered the features of Richard, the steward's son, who was a student at one of the universities, and then happened to be on a visit to his father.

"Between this youth and me an intimacy had grown, out of a conformity of tastes and pursuits; and since the night of the ghostly visitation, he had permitted me to share his apartment, for I was afraid to sleep in that next the baron's, and had hazarded his displeasure by abandoning it, in the hope that he had got something else to think of besides affairs of state, or indeed any other affairs of this world.

"My friend Richard seemed, as he accosted me, to labour with some tidings of great weight—'After you left me this evening,' said he, 'I exchanged the domino which I intended to wear, for these more gay habiliments, under which I escaped your observation. I have been employed in the

same manner as yourself for the last half-hour, and having watched your motions, and the uncommon anxiety they displayed, I have felt inclined to think you know more of our extraordinary guest than others. I *do* know more of him than others,' continued he, in a solemn tone; 'but let us get to a distance from this clump, before I say any more.'

"He looked back upon the trees, from which we were gradually withdrawing; as he spoke, a hollow gust bowed their dense foliage—we quickened our pace.

"At length having reached a path at no great distance from the lights, by which the green of a shrubbery that bordered it was all illumined with a soft and yellow lustre, we paused to take breath, after which my companion proceeded:—

'For the last three nights you have observed that my mind laboured beneath some hidden uneasiness, and have occasionally asked me, before we fell asleep, what ailed me?'

'I have,' said I; 'and had I not feared you

would think me impertinent, I should have pressed my inquiries farther than I did.'

'In the hope of obtaining a return of confidence,' continued he, 'I shall now communicate to you the cause of it. Do you recollect the last evening we were reading together in the baron's library, when you closed the large volume of *Provençal Tales*, at the place where that horrible murder was detected, saying, if you continued to read, you should dream of nothing but horrors for the remainder of the night, and shortly after, complaining of being sleepy, retired to bed, leaving me still engaged in study?'

"I nodded an affirmative.

'You know the large Venetian mirror that fronts the place where I was sitting—that in the old cumbrous gilt frame, and surrounded by the sombrous pictures of woods, and caverns, and assassins appearing in the covertures, that the baron lately received from Italy, as a present from his nephew?'

'Very well.'



‘ You had scarcely left the place ten minutes, when I was startled from a fit of drowsiness——’

“ While Richard was speaking, I observed an unusual bustle prevailing in the grounds, and the company hurrying towards a place where a great crowd was already assembled.

“ I pointed out the circumstance, and the curiosity of my companion being equally aroused with mine, he proposed that we should go see what was the matter before he finished what he had to relate.

“ I acquiesced. When we reached the crowd, we found the baron and confessor, both apparently in great agitation, and engaged in putting hurried questions to two men, who were dressed in light-coloured jackets and caps, all spotted with blood, and who, it appeared, had been given into the custody of some of the domestics.

“ I asked some of the bystanders what had happened? They were unable to tell me, but said that the men had come running up from a part of the grounds in

a great fright, and had been ordered to be seized by the baron, upon some communication they had made to him.

“ I pressed nearer to where they stood, and their interrogators having recovered, in some degree, from the perturbation into which they seemed to have been thrown, and their questions becoming more methodical, the prisoners gave an account of what had occurred, of which the following is the substance.

“ There was a fine chestnut-tree, in a remote part of the grounds, which the baron's father had planted with his own hands, on the day on which his son was born ; and there was a report current in the family, that an astrologer had foretold, that with this tree the baron would thrive and perish, and it was always called the baron's brother.

“ Whether he himself gave any credit to the prediction, if such prediction was ever pronounced, I am unable to say ; but certain it is, that he was very sedulous in his care of the tree, had its roots constantly

supplied with fresh mould, and its stem well fenced from any cattle that might happen to graze around it.

“ On the present occasion it was surmounted by an arch of coloured lamps, the abutments of which sprung from the foliage of a tree on either side, and within which was displayed a pompous inscription in praise of the baron’s virtues. At a certain hour of the night there was to have been a dance round it, performed by a corps of stage-dancers, who had been sent for from Paris.

“ The prisoners were two of the baron’s serfs, who had been employed to light the lamps, and they now said, that while they were engaged in this duty, having began with the wreath that encircled the stem of the tree, they heard drops, as of a sudden shower of rain, pattering among the branches; and while they were regretting the injury it would do the festival, they suddenly found themselves all bedropt with blood—a circumstance at which they had scarcely time to express their horror

and astonishment, when the tree fell with a loud crash, but in such a direction as left them both uninjured, and a loud voice was heard in the air above them.

“The baron asked impetuously, and with what was meant to be a smile of derision, but in which perturbation was at first distinctly visible, and soon quelled every other expression, what the voice had uttered?

“The men stammered, and seemed unwilling to say.

“The baron became furious, stamped with his foot, and called for fetters.

“One of them then said, that he had distinctly heard the words—‘*Thus shall the guilty perish in the fulness of their honours!*’

“A stupor now seemed to seize the faculties of the baron; he let go one of the men, whom he had held by the collar, and his eyes became fixed upon the earth.

“Meanwhile the confessor directed that the prisoners should be conveyed to the keep, after having assumed a taunting air, that was evidently forced, and had in it no

tone of confidence, and menaced them that they should lie there till the development of the plot in which they had been engaged, against the peace of an indulgent master, should call them forth to punishment.

“He then said a few words, in a low tone, to the baron, who seemed roused by it, and proposed that some attempt should be made, by examining the tree, to ascertain what mischievous persons were so busily at work to mar the pleasures of the evening. He then led the way towards it, and the whole company, which by this time had assembled, followed in gloomy silence, which no one made an effort to dispel.

“When we passed from behind an angle of the woods that concealed the tree, we perceived that the lamps were all lighted; but on drawing nearer, it was discovered that the inscription was changed from the eulogium which it was to have presented, to the awful expression which the man had repeated.

“The masks now formed a circle round

the tree, and some stooped to examine it. Every part of the foliage reeked with blood, hot as though it had just poured from the veins of a living being; and it appeared quite plain that some powerful pressure had at once divided the stem, for there was no mark whatsoever of axe or saw.

“Horror seemed to seize the assembly; now there was a profound silence, and now a buzz of whispers ran round the circle; and I heard a mask who was near me say to another—‘It’s not ten minutes since I was here; the first inscription was then perfect; I was enabled to read it by the light of a single lamp that hung on the top of the tree. No *human* power could have changed it in the time.’

“The baron and the confessor seemed confounded, and as if labouring to devise some plausible construction to put on the affair. At length a mask said, in a louder tone than any one had as yet ventured to use—‘Whether this be agency of man or devil, the *magus*, who was in the grounds

just now, is the author of it, or I'm greatly mistaken.'

'What *magus*?' said the confessor, suddenly starting from a reverie, into which he had fallen for a moment; 'I saw no mask in such a habit to-night.'

'Nor I,' said the baron.

'My conjecture was now confirmed.

'I believe, my lord,' said the mask, 'if that be the case, you and the holy father are the only persons here whose attention he failed of attracting.'

'And what has become of him?' said the confessor.

'He went into that clump of cypress,' said the mask, 'over the tops of which you see the illuminated obelisk, and, I suppose, sunk into the earth, for when it was searched, he was no where to be found.'

'Fools!' said the baron, rousing all his energies; 'no one dared explore the clump; let it be thoroughly searched directly; it may conceal some of the enginery with which these villainous tricks have been

played off. I suppose the juggling ruffian, having completed his artifice, has himself left the grounds.'

'It's false—he's present !' said a hollow and unearthly voice, which I thought close to my ear, and I presume every one else thought the same, for each turned immediately, with inquiring looks, to the person who was standing next him.

"Horror again seemed to subdue the baron's faculties; and the confessor seemed to share his feelings.

"A deep silence of several minutes, unbroken but by the low murmur of the wind in the tops of the surrounding trees, succeeded. When I looked around the croud, composed of persons in whose false visages nothing was seen to move but the eyes—while I laboured under the awful impression that the voice had generally produced, and the fearful expectation it had created, I almost fancied myself surrounded by beings of another world. No one seemed inclined to disturb the stillness, but each anxiously awaited what might further occur.



“ Suddenly a mask cried ‘ Hark ! ’ and immediately the low beat of a bell, which seemed to come from the chapel of the castle, broke on the silence. Another stroke, and another followed—all was mute and breathless expectation—it was the knell of death, flung sullenly and slowly on the breeze. It ceased—we listened still—every village steeple in the circumjacent country which had in the morning dispensed more joyous tones, now responded to the mournful vibration. These ceased in their turn. A low requiem rose, in sweet and solemn melody, from the chapel ; but this soon seemed, as it ascended, to mingle with shrill, sharp, slender shrieks, till it was entirely lost, and then a faint yell passed through the air, immediately above our heads.

“ The astonishment and terror that had chained, as it were, our faculties, increased every moment. The baron and the confessor were unable any longer to counterfeit incredulity, though the latter yet made a faint effort to do so—‘ Who,’ he asked,

in a tone in which there was no longer confidence (it was hollow and tremulous, and his frame trembled, and his lips quivered, as he uttered it), 'who has the chapel keys?'

'I have,' replied the steward, who had been standing by, clad in a domino, taking off his mask as he spoke.

'Are you sure, when you locked it, there was no one within?'

'Certain,' said the steward; 'I never leave it without examining every part of it.'

'Is there but one entrance to it?' again asked the confessor, his voice becoming fainter and fainter.

'I thought, father,' replied the steward, with something significant in his manner, 'that you were well acquainted with the passage that leads to the low door, which is generally concealed by the communion table, through the vaults in which the remains of baron Reginald Walstein repose, the last of that branch of the family, the extinction of which delivered the title and estates to the ancestors of our present lord.'

‘ Oh, true, true, I had forgot,’ said the confessor, his voice faltering more and more; ‘ are you sure nobody could have got in that way?’

‘ Most sure; I have the keys of that too.—they are never out of my possession.—Would your lordship wish,’ added he, turning to the baron, ‘ that I should examine the chapel?’

“ The baron seemed scarcely to hear him; but giving a languid nod, he took it for a command, and proceeded to obey it, attended by several of the company, who had, by this time, all unmasked, presenting none but familiar and well-known faces.

“ Another pause now followed, while we expected the return of the steward; it seemed like one of expectation, but it must have been the expectation of further horrors, for no one could have reasonably hoped for any satisfactory solution of the yell that had passed above us, and which had in it nothing that was of this world.

“ All was again still; or if the silence was now and then broken by a question

and answer, in a low tone of voice, that sound only served to mark its depth.

“ Not far from the fallen tree, round which we were assembled, there was a theatre erected, in a tasteful manner enough. It was, as it were, sunk in a wood, some trees having been cleared for the purpose, and others of majestic growth and redundant foliage formed wings to the *proscenium*, and were filled with lamps; and a scroll, bearing a suitable inscription, was attached to a festoon of the same, which depended from the boughs, where they met above. Here, after the dance round the fallen chestnut, the entertainments of the evening, before supper, were to have concluded with the performance of a comedy.

“ While we were still awaiting the return of the steward, a sudden burst of light, in the direction of this theatre, attracted our attention. We all turned towards it, and beheld the edifice completely illuminated, as if by magic; the design

and decorations were unaltered, but the inscription was changed. The scroll now bore, in blood-red characters—‘*Such were thy deeds!*’

“While we gazed, unknowing what next would follow, the *magus* was discerned standing beneath one of the trees that supported the *proscenium*. His mask was removed, and his countenance presented the lineaments of him you have this evening seen stalking amidst us, in the character of a harmless artificer, who makes the timid credulity of the vulgar afford him a scant subsistence. He was looking steadfastly upon the curtain that intercepted our view of the stage, and seemed lost in thought; but his lips moved, as if he were speaking to himself. His eyeballs were fixed, and had a glaze over them, resembling that of death. His countenance was overspread with more than its usual paleness.

“The person who had so hardily entered the clump in search of him, and who turned out to be a near relation of the baron’s, now burst through the croud, in the direc-

tion where the *magus* stood. When he reached the edge of it, he hesitated for a few moments, as if his boldness had forsaken him; then again rushed forward; but he had not advanced above a few paces, when he stopped suddenly, and gradually receded; but still, with several others who had followed him, remained steadfastly looking on the *magus*, as if prepared to seize him, whenever he should attempt to withdraw.

“ I afterwards learned that this man declared that he had been forcibly checked, and pushed back by some invisible but irresistible power; but whether this was fact, or merely an excuse for his want of spirit to carry through his design, I know not; certain it is, that what every one had seen in the course of the evening, afforded him an ample title to credit.

“ The *magus* remained motionless for about a minute, still having his face directed to the theatre, while the countenances of the beholders were as steadily turned towards him.

“ Suddenly his limbs all shook, as if with convulsions, which every moment became more violent—his bosom heaved with violent throes—a film, one would have thought, had fallen from his eyes, which now shot forth fire, appearing in his stern and repulsive countenance like the corruscations of a stormy night.

“ The severity of his aspect continued, but the agitation of his limbs ceased. He waved his wand, and pointing it to the stage, was again motionless as a statue. A sweet symphony was heard above, and the curtain drew slowly up.

“ An involuntary exclamation burst from several persons present—‘ Good Heaven ! count Steinberg !’

“ The scene represented a dungeon, (there had been no such scene painted by order of the baron,) and there were four figures on the stage. That which had attracted the exclamation bore the image of count Steinberg, who had been known by several present ; two others had the appearance of hired assassins, and ano-

ther, who seemed directing their operations, had his back turned towards us. The shadow that personated the count appeared expiring by a wound in his breast, which seemed to have been just inflicted, and through which the blood was gushing in a full stream. His eye was turned, with a half-supplicating, half-menacing air, towards the master-murderer, and he seemed as if about to speak ; but the words died upon his lips, and sinking backwards, he was convulsed for a moment, and expired.

“ Just at this part of the tremendous drama, played by no earthly actors, I turned to see how the baron was affected by it.

“ Both he and the confessor looked like guilty spirits receiving their final sentence before the judgment-seat of Omnipotence. The character of their terror was quite of a different nature from that which marked the countenances of the other spectators. The deepest hues of despair had settled on their brows, and there was a blackness mingled with the paleness of their cheeks.

“ While I still gazed on them, for the



horror that seemed to enwrap their figures had power to divide my attention with the sorcerer, the baron suddenly sunk to the ground, apparently lifeless; and directing my eye towards the stage, I found that this had been probably caused by the fourth figure, the face of which had been concealed till then, when suddenly turning, it had given to view his very countenance; not indeed bearing the same expression which then characterized it, but marked with the savage exultation of completed vengeance.

“ The cup of horrors was now complete—an universal groan burst from the bosoms of the beholders. Suddenly the lights throughout the grounds were extinguished with a hissing sound, and blue lightnings flashed, and dismal shrieks were heard in every direction.

“ The sky was partially overcast; but the few stars that were visible enabled us to discern the shadowy figure of the *magus* pass, while the curtain dropped before the *proscenium*. No one dared to arrest his progress. He was seen no more.

"It was not till some minutes after stillness had again taken possession of the scene, that any one seemed to think of the baron; we now crowded around him. Torches were seen flaming in the direction of the castle, and the steward, and those who had followed him, soon approached, breathless with haste, and terror that equalled our own, for they had above witnessed the extinction of the lights, together with the other marks of preternatural agency which had succeeded the close of the shadowy tragedy.

"The baron yet lived, but it was evident that his glass was running low. He was carried, still insensible, to his chamber, a few of the company, consisting chiefly of persons attached to him by the ties of blood, or political connexion, following in mournful silence, while the remainder withdrew to their several homes, except a few, who living at a greater distance, and having lonesome roads to pass, awaited the return of light before they would venture forth. Common politeness required

that I should not absent myself from these, the steward having requested I would attend to them, and see that they were provided with refreshments ; in consequence of which, and of my fellow-lodger Richard being obliged to depart at an early hour in the morning for his college, I was never able to learn the circumstances that had occurred in the library.

“The ensuing day, nearly all such of the baron’s household as were not his vassals required their dismissal ; and many, sooner than stay in a place, the owner of which, they had good cause to believe, was the fixed and certain property of the enemy of the human race, withdrew, renouncing whatever portion of wages was due to them.

“I remained, for I had a considerable sum due me, and without I was possessed of it, I thought there was no place in the world where I might hope to be received ; but this was not my only inducement ; I must own I was, in a great measure, detained by an irresistible curiosity to witness the catastrophe of the terrible drama,

of the most awful scenes of which I had been a spectator. Would to Heaven I had known how to govern the impulse !”

Here the narrator sighed deeply, or rather groaned, and remained, for some minutes, as if absorbed by painful reflections. He then proceeded :—

“ The castle was now become one of the most melancholy places it was ever my lot to inhabit. It had usually been filled by a large retinue of servants, and frequently by company, and was used to present a scene of cheerful bustle ; doors clapped all day—bells rang—servants hurried to and fro, the bearers of the noon-day collation, and the more solid and rich-steaming evening banquet—music often cheered the night, and the beat of the dancer’s foot shook the fabric ; now all seemed solitary and deserted ; a stillness, like that of death, reigned even at noonday ; the windows of many of the chambers were never opened ; and if the door of any of them happened to lie open as you passed, the fancy embodied grim

and terrific shapes in the depth of their darkness, or gave life to the armed figures of the baron's warlike ancestors that ornamented their walls.

“ Of the few domestics that remained, the greater part did so sore against their will; and as they glided about, pale, dejected, and with almost noiseless step, for the sound of their own footfall sufficed to terrify them, they appeared like so many phantoms wandering through the realms of Tartarus and night.

“ At night they usually kept assembled together in the servants' hall; and if some indispensable business required their presence in some remote part of the edifice, they went in pairs; and they never dared retire to rest till cockcrow.

## CHAP. VIII.

Yet did the worst remain;  
My dazzled eyes I upward cast;  
Not opening hell itself could blast  
Their sight like what I saw.      MARMION.

“THE baron had recovered his senses the morning after the masquerade, contrary to the expectation of every one; but it was quite evident, both to himself and others, that he had not long to live.

“The first use he made of returning reason was to desire that a monk, called father Jerome, should be sent for from a neighbouring convent: this was an ascetic, who had, by penitentiary exercises and severe mortifications, earned, in the surrounding country, a great reputation for sanctity; and who, having once happened to animadvert rather severely, in a sermon he had preached in the cathedral church of the diocese, to a crowded congregation,

upon some vices to which the baron was addicted, so framed his discourse, that the person to whom he alluded could not be mistaken ; he had thereby incurred the resentment of this powerful minister, and had, in consequence, undergone as much persecution as could affect one whose wants were even below what nature seems to justify, and whom no earthly suffering could reach, without strengthening his hopes of eternal bliss.

“ It was matter of surprise to every one who was acquainted with these circumstances, that the baron should select this person to administer comfort to his departing spirit ; but when the confessor, who had been hitherto the only person who had ever conversed with him on spiritual topics, if indeed such had been the subject of any conference they ever had, and who had now somewhat recovered his firmness of mind, heard of this order, he seemed surprised and perplexed, and directing the messenger to stop till he should see him again, he hurried to his

lord's apartment; he left it, however, in a few minutes, with an air of chagrin and disappointment, and in a tone that indicated a peevish reluctance, desired that the order should be complied with.

“ Father Jerome came immediately, and remained with the dying sinner till after sunset. I met him by chance, as he passed, on his way to his convent, through the outer court of the castle, and his figure was well suited to the silent, solitary scene; so deep a stillness reigned, that even the tread of his bare foot echoed in the arched portal he was approaching; his face pale and wan, more with mortifications than age, was partially shaded by his cowl, beneath which I could discern that it was marked by the deepest traces of horror; his hands were crossed upon his breast, and he seemed to pray inwardly as he moved.

“ When he perceived me, he lifted his head, which had been gently bent downwards, and said, in a mild tone—‘ Peace be unto you, my son !’

‘ The same to you, father !’ I replied.



‘Do you watch to-night,’ he continued, ‘in your lord’s chamber?’

‘It is my turn to watch a part of it, father.’

‘Then mark his feelings; and if earthly desires should ever beckon you forward, and point, in derision, to the trampled lives and happiness of your fellow-men, let remembrance dwell upon them. Many are there, who exult as they destroy the body, or plant a venomed dart in the mind of one who stood in the way of their wishes, or offended their pride, to whom an hour arrives, when, to their spirit, the memory of their exultation will be gall. Good-night, my son; I must speed my pace; the dews fall thick, and my body is feeble and thinly clad, but I thank Heaven, the spirit that dwells in it is healthy, for it has often sought to avert, and never inflicted evil.’

“I looked after the friar as he crossed the meadow path that led to the convent; his steps indicated a weakness scarcely fit to support the weight of his garment, that,

daggled with the dew that filled the high grass on either side, hung heavily around him; a gust of wind threw back his cowl, and a hand, like that of a skeleton, was raised to replace it.

“ I reflected on his words and his life, and on the situation of the powerful and wealthy man he had been sent for to sooth — one who had trodden upon him as upon a worm; and I thought how little worth were those worldly joys, that might be so easily renounced, so dearly purchased.

“ The baron continued to linger, notwithstanding the opinion of his physicians, who momentarily expected his dissolution. The day after the masquerade, a courier had been dispatched to hasten the arrival of the count and the secretary, but with little hope of their reaching the castle time enough to find the baron living. He still lived, however, though he had just sustained a violent paroxysm, when one night, as the whole household was assembled, according to custom, in the servants’ hall, a loud knocking was heard at the portal of

the castle, and on its being opened, the count and secretary entered, with every mark of illness, trepidation, and excessive fatigue.

“ The count asked, in a hurried manner, if his uncle was still living ? for the courier had met them, with the account of what had occurred ; and on being answered in the affirmative, rushed up to his chamber, followed by the secretary, where father Jerome and the confessor had been for some time before.

“ They had not been there many minutes, when the bell rung violently, and some half-dozen of us flew to know what was the matter.

“ When we entered the apartment, we found the baron again relapsed into convulsions, supported by the secretary and father Jerome, while the count and the confessor stood at the foot of the bed : three of the party seemed greatly agitated ; father Jerome alone was calm, and in a state to afford any assistance to the patient.

“ The secretary resigned his office to one

of the attendants, and moved over to where the count and confessor were standing ; all three fell into a low conversation, of which some snatches reached my ear—‘ Did you not see it ? ’ said one.—‘ It glided close by me,’ replied another ; ‘ its form was undefined—the feeling that its contact inspired was undefined also ; but for worlds I would not again experience it. Good Heaven ! ’ What was further said was uttered in so low a tone, that I could only catch a word here and there ; guilt—vengeance—phantom—retribution—were some of those I heard.

“ Meanwhile the baron recovered his senses, but seemed agitated by some dreadful vision ; he pointed to a remote and dark corner of the chamber, and cried—‘ Aye, aye ; but too well I know you : what needs that question ? Was it not time enough for you to seize your victim when the boundaries of this world were passed ? Gore-dabbled fiend ! if I am thine, as that hellish smile would say I am, leave me at least till my disencumbered spirit shall have

freedom and energy to cope with suffering. Ha ! dost thou yield ? Yes, if doomed to serve in hell, and nought can reverse my doom, I will at least assert the power that in this world separated me from the vulgar. Still, still thou confessest my sway, as in the hour I slew thee ! What, gone ! gone at my bidding !

“ A horrible laugh, in which despair and exultation were mingled, and to the violence of which his relaxed muscles seemed scarcely equal, succeeded these words ; but as reason became stronger, more subdued feelings again took possession of him ; he looked around, and his knowledge of the persons present seemed to revive, while he wiped away the cold dews that hung on his brow, and appeared to shudder at the excess into which the wanderings of his reason, and momentary return of his pride, had led him.

“ After two or three minutes passed in mournful silence, he seemed conscious that his spirit was fleeting ; and as if desirous of making some communication to the count,

he pointed to the box of papers which I had delivered to him, and which stood on a table not far from the bed, and while he gasped for breath, uttered, in broken sentences—‘The sorcerer is interested to save you, rather than destroy; but—but—he cannot counteract the decrees of Providence. There—the papers—they will tell all; the Pass of Foscari, in the depth of the Apennine—the sword of the young Rivers——’

Edward listened with intense anxiety; what the narrative was disclosing had a close connexion with the dreadful information he had received from the fatal manuscript.

Herman continued—“Prepare thy soul to meet their terrors! seek—seek—not,” he heaved a convulsive throe, and, ‘vainly,’ he had just strength to add, ‘*to avoid them,*’ in a faint tone, and expired.

“The bystanders remained horror-stricken, and silently gazing on the mass of lifeless clay, from whom, but a little be-

fore, a voice could have issued, whose every vibration could have quailed some human spirit, now deserted and powerless. At length the count, having given some directions with respect to the body, retired, with the secretary and the confessor, to his own apartment, having first secured the box of papers, and there all three remained for several hours shut up in close conference.

“ The castle continued a scene of silence and melancholy; the howlet was already a tenant of its deserted courts, and her melancholy scream, as its twilight echo smote their walls, was often answered by the pious ejaculation of some timid bondsman, who might happen at the time to cross them.

“ The body of the baron was deposited in its last habitation privately, and by torch-light; it was not thought prudent that he should have a public funeral, lest some marks of popular indignation should have been the consequence; the inhabitants of

the castle alone attended, and among them there was none who shed a tear, or heaved a sigh of sorrow.

The body was laid down in the chapel previous to its being conveyed to the vault in which it was to repose, and the confessor pronounced over it a discourse, in which the virtues of the deceased were faintly eulogized.

“ There was no vibration in any heart, to any clause of his eulogy ; no voice murmured—‘ How true ! ’ nor on any side was there heard the more expressive response of a stifled sob—no one felt that he had lost a friend ; and when we turned our eyes from the pall that covered the body, to the dark and sullen countenance of the count, the sense of past harshness was mingled with the apprehension of that which was to come.

“ I am now arrived at the last scene of my strange and melancholy narrative ; would to Heaven that of it, at least, I had been saved the sight !

“ It happened, that when the confessor



had finished his discourse, and was about to recite the service for the dead, he found that he had forgotten to bring with him the missal he was wont to use, and I was desired to fetch one, which lay in a compartment of the gallery of the chapel; as I stooped to take it up from a seat on which it was deposited, I perceived something white beneath, and reaching down to examine what it might be, you may conceive my surprise, when I pulled forth the very cloth I had seen in the wood, and which was now fraught with the same contents as before.

“ While I was examining it, the count called, in an angry tone, to know what detained me? and hastily replacing it, I descended with the missal.

“ When I reached the place where the body lay, something seemed to have happened in my absence, for the confessor, who had pronounced his discourse without any mark of discomposure, now evidently laboured under some severe emotion, as, with faltering accents, he went through the

service. What had occasioned this, I never could learn; such of the attendants as I questioned, said that they knew not how it had come to pass—a sudden perturbation of mind had seized them all at once, but the confessor in a much greater degree than any of the rest, so that he would have fallen, if he had not been supported. I was fain to attribute it to the unseen presence of some unearthly being, wrapt in some essence intolerable to mortal sense.

“ A more striking scene than was now before me I have not witnessed. It often happens, that when the remains of our fellow-men are consigned to the dust from which they sprung, that the funeral garb forms, in many present, a contrast with the calm, and placid, and ruddy countenances of those whose persons they shroud; but here all was of a piece—the long black cloak and shadowy crape consorted well with the pallid and terrified visages that looked from amidst their gloom; and the damp chill darkness of the chapel's long withdrawing aisle, which was but feebly

dispelled by the light of the torches, increased the awe that smote on every heart.

“ When the service was concluded, the count ordered the bearers, in a stern voice, to take up the body, and deposit it in the vault.

“ They obeyed: we all followed in gloomy silence; and in a few minutes, having performed this last duty, we returned into the chapel, and heard, perhaps with feelings which no obsequies had ever excited in us before, the hinges, that long intervals of rest had clogged with rust, heavily grate, and the massy door they supported close with a thundering sound.

“ The persons who bore the torches, and the other attendants, now gradually dropt off, till no person was left in the chapel but myself and two others; one of these was the steward, who was used always to examine the various parts of it before he locked it, lest any person, having slipped in unobserved, might lurk, with a view to purloin the plate, or embroidered hangings, or any thing else of value it contained;

the other was one of the attendants, who was employed reading a monumental inscription.

"I awaited, in the farther part of the edifice, the departure of this person, that I might shew the package I had discovered to the steward, and at least have some one to talk to concerning it, if we should even, upon a consultation, think proper to leave it where it was, as I had done before.

"He did not perceive me, for there being only one solitary lamp left in the chapel, besides that by the aid of which the steward was performing his wonted task, and this being placed close beside him, he was unable to distinguish any object in the gloom, which its feeble rays could not penetrate.

"When the steward approached the place where I stood, I called to him in a low voice, wishing to desire that he would prolong his stay till he had exhausted the patience of the other person, who, I now be-

gan to think, was afraid of leaving the chapel without a companion. He was just then employed removing a chest which contained the holy vestments, and did not hear me; but the murmur of my voice, I fancy, reached the other, for he turned about, threw an anxious look towards me, taking up, and holding forward the lamp: a gust of wind, as he passed a window that opened from the gallery, just at that moment extinguished the steward's light, and he went, as I conjectured, to relume it at that which was held by the other person, who seemed not to have recovered his alarm.

“When the steward reached him, he said something to him in a low tone, to which he replied—‘To say the truth, I don’t half like the job to-night; for once I’ll leave things to chance;’ and at the same time, instead of relighting his own lamp, snatched that which the other man held, and, followed close by him, rushed through the chapel door, which was just at hand.

"I was so confounded at their unlooked-for departure, that the key was turned in the lock, and I heard their departing steps on the pavement of the court, before I be-  
thought myself of calling after them; and when I did, my voice reaching them in hollow and indistinct murmurs, and almost drowned by the wind that howled through the deserted courts, had no other effect than to make them quicken their pace.

"I was now in a situation that would have sufficed to appal the stoutest heart; shut up in a lone, dark building, in which I had discovered implements of incantation—in which I firmly believed malign spirits had just brooded—and in a vault contiguous to which the corse of a murderer had been just deposited."

Here a deep groan was heard within the tent, the inmates of which it seemed to startle; but one of them, bursting into a kind of half-laugh, said—"Don't be frightened—it was I. I was just thinking, that if I had been in the situation of Her-

man, I should have died outright with terror. But pray go on, for I long to know what you saw, for something terrible I'm sure you did see, by your face, which, ever since you began to talk about the burial and the chapel, has got paler and paler."

"Saw!" said Herman; "aye, I did see; and would to Heaven these eyes had been displaced from their sockets before I saw that, the effects of which must extend even beyond the hour in which I shall resign my breath.

"I knew not how," he continued, "to extricate myself from the dilemma in which I was placed; the prospect of passing my night in the chapel was dreadful; it would not have been very agreeable at any time—I leave you to judge what it must have been, after all that had recently passed."

"What must it have been indeed!" said the man whose groan had before interrupted him. "What must it have been!" and he sighed deeply, as if he himself had been immured in the chapel.

"I sought anxiously," proceeded Herman, "for some means to effect my deliverance; and it occurring to me that I might let myself down from one of the gallery windows, which opened on the lawn, by means of the drapery with which parts of the stalls were hung, I ascended, for the purpose of examining the feasibility of the enterprize.

"I had scarcely got into the gallery, when I thought I heard a noise, as if of a door unlocked. I listened attentively, and in fearful expectation; for some moments all was still, but then I thought I could discern a confused murmur of voices in the direction of the communion-table. While I listened, still breathless with terror, another key was turned in a lock, the sound of which appeared nearer than that I had heard before; the communion-table was shoved forward, and a light streamed from behind it.

"I now recollected the door mentioned by the steward on the night of the masquerade; but I was utterly at a loss to conjec-



ture who it was that was about to appear at it, for if I had been missed in the castle, and any one, having conjectured the cause of my absence, was humane enough to propose liberating me, there was no reason why they should not have used the ordinary entrance for the purpose.

"The table was again shoved, and the heads of two persons appeared above it, in one of whom I was enabled to discover, by the light of a lamp he held in his hand, the dreaded sorcerer. I thought I should have fainted with terror; I couched close behind the wainscotting of a pew, and, trembling, I did not know what might follow.

"What did follow, I cannot relate. It is yet a mystery to me how I witnessed it and live."

"Oh, for Heaven's sake—for Heaven's sake!" issued at once from the mouths of all his auditors, "do not leave us in the dark now! I'd a thousand times rather hear this than all I have heard before."

"And I too," said one. "And I too," said another.

"My mind tells me," said a third, "that the fairy playactors were nothing to it."

"Your mind then don't deceive you," said Herman, in a solemn tone; "but your curiosity must remain ungratified; I cannot relate—I dare not relate it."

"*Dare not relate it!*" said a hollow voice, in a commanding tone, which appeared to be within the tent, and in which Edward immediately recognised the thrilling tones he had heard once, and but once, before in the wood.

"*Dare not relate it!*" repeated the voice; and again, in a tone which indicated a consciousness that the command would not be disobeyed—"dare not relate it!"

A bustle seemed to prevail within the hut, but no one spoke; and after a little time, all was still. It appeared as if no one dared utter a word, in the consciousness of the unseen presence of the terrible being, with the extent of whose power they had been so recently made acquainted; even Edward felt his heart quailed, to think there was a being walked the earth, to

whom his most secret actions could be known, while he himself remained unseen.

He waited for some little time longer; but finding that no one stirred in the tent, he rose with caution, that he might not stir the foliage of a bush that was on the bank beside him; but there was no danger, if he had, of the noise discovering him—it was not likely that, after what had occurred, any one would venture forth to ascertain what it might be.

The village clock again struck the hour, and guided by its sound, he took his way through the wood, following a path that wound among the trees. He soon reached the fair green, on which several persons were already up, and engaged in preparations for the business of the day.

When he entered the hostel, he found some of its inhabitants also up, and preparing breakfast for such of their guests as required to be out at an early hour.

As, guided by one of these, he passed to his room, a door of another apartment was softly opened, and closed again imme-

diately, but not before he thought he had recognised, by the passing gleam of the lamp which was borne by the attendant, the dark countenance and bosom of the female minstrel, contrasted by the whiteness of a wrapper and nightcap, beneath the plaits of which her glossy tresses curled in negligent profusion.

A thought struck him, that her wakefulness might have been occasioned by anxiety about himself, and he chid himself because it pleased him; but when he pressed his pillow, it was still his companion, and at length succeeded in expelling from his intellect, as it relaxed into a sweet slumber, Walmer, and Walstein, and Martinelli, and the fatal manuscript, and the Pass of Foscari, in the bosom of the Appennine.

When the exile awoke in the morning, his ears were saluted by a mixture of noises, that might have given some idea of the confusion of Babel; drums beat, cymbals clashed, music played—the vendors of

various wares invited, in voices by no means harmonious, to the purchase of their respective commodities—and the squeaking trumps of some fifty small aspirants to military honours, united their slender note to the general uproar.

The exile rose, and withdrawing the chequered curtain that feebly excluded the daylight, gazed on the merry scene, illumed by the splendor of a sunny day, with feelings of pleasure, for misanthropy, though he had reason to be discontented with mankind, had as yet taken but a feeble hold of his mind, and it still sent a thrill of joy into his heart to see his fellow-men catch some evanescent sparks of joy amidst the shades of life.

Booths now presented themselves to his eye in various directions, gay with flags, and streamers, and party-coloured hangings; harlequins bounded,—tumblers whirled their bodies aloft in air—jugglers breathed fire from their nostrils—and the wooden people scolded, and struck their heads together in mimic combat, with a

vehemence that drew peals of laughter from the simple crowd around, of taste little fastidious, and pleased at small expence.

When the exile descended, he found his Moorish friend and her children seated on the bench at the door, enjoying the frolics of the motley crowd with as keen a zest as though they had not been accustomed to such scenes. Juan was in high glee, pointing out to his sister the antics of a Merry Andrew, when chancing to turn round, to see if she perceived the object that afforded him so much gratification, he observed the companion of his late nocturnal march—"Hey, hey, milord," said he, "the sorcerer, then, has not turned you into a bear or a lion! your face and hands are as smooth as ever, and I have no doubt but you can speak yet almost as glibly as myself; do pray let us hear you: Theresa won't think you have escaped scot free, till her senses convince her of it; she has a prodigious terror of sorcerers; mother could scarcely get her to bed last night, she

was so terrified on your account: for my part, I would have followed to have shared your danger, only mother wouldn't let me; I think I could have got Theresa's permission easily enough."

While the youth was speaking, Theresa bit her lips, blushed, and kept her eyes fixed upon the ground, till Edward, obeying an impulse he could not resist, and experiencing a delight which would have been perfect, but for some still whispering of conscience, that it was dangerous, taking her hand, which was not refused, asked her if she felt ashamed of having experienced anxiety for his welfare?

"I should be ungrateful," replied she, stammering, and colouring still deeper, "if I did not feel anxious for the safety of my mother's benefactor; but this wild boy runs on at such a rate."

Edward sighed, repeated the word "benefactor" in a low tone, that indicated disappointment, and gently pressed the hand he held.

Theresa did not seem to want for the fa-

cility of comprehending such language, that characterizes her sex ; she raised her head, and cast a timid glance at him who had involuntarily used it.

Whether the fact was so, or that it was a yet unsubdued vanity that begot the error, he thought the full, dark eye of the maiden was filled with affection and delight, and suddenly remembering the vow he had made to Heaven, that she should never be another murdered Luise, he dropt her hand, and formally saluting her and her companions, retired into the hostel, and having in a few minutes dispatched his morning's meal, walked out through another door, and mingled with the crowd.

There he first ruminated, spite of the various dissonance by which he was surrounded, on the love that he believed he had excited, and regretted that he had informed his quondam *protégée* of his fallen fortunes, because he thought such information might have encouraged hopes of a return, which he was determined should never be made the means of gratifying a



licitious passion for one, the purity of whose mind, he could well see, even from the little conversation he had with her, would render his triumph and her destruction simultaneous.

He received the bitter, but wholesome gratification of conscious self-denial into his mind, as, after painting her to his imagination with emaciated form and decayed beauty, and breathing words of humble love, in prospect of the grave, he determined not to see her again but once, and that when she was about to depart on the ensuing morning, to attend two or three other fairs which were to be in the circumjacent country, previous to her passing the French border.

Once, indeed, he asked himself whether he might not find in her all that he could wish in a partner of his life? but he had determined to part with life; and even if he were to forego such determination, would it not be treason to the memory of Luise, of her whose spirit watched over him, if he were to give a stepmother to

his babe? There was a possibility too, at least, that he might be one day restored to the rank he had lost in society, and with what face could he present to the world, in that event, a wife, who, not to say any thing of her dark visage, which, perhaps, after all, being fraught with ten times more beauty than ever he had seen in a white one, might be then excused, would afford, by a total want of education, (for her mother, bounded, like other Moorish women, in her acquirements, did not seem to have pressed much learning on her daughter,) and by the nature of her present occupation, worse than that of the lowest peasant; an inexhaustible food for ridicule to the malice of his enemies? every spark of latent pride that lurked around his heart flowed up into his countenance, and his resolution was fixed.

He now set himself busily to work to look for Herman, in the hope of extracting from him a fuller information with respect to certain points of his narration, in which he thought himself interested; but

he was no where to be found. Several persons he questioned with respect to him knew nothing about him, nor had seen no such person as he described the whole morning; a few knew him, but had not seen him either. At length, as he passed a group engaged in very earnest conversation, he thought he distinguished the voice of one of the persons he had heard speak in the tent the night before; and the mention of Herman's name confirming him in this conjecture, he asked if he knew him?

"Know him, Mein Herr!" replied he, "that I do; and if I don't find him speedily, I shall be ruined, for I am engaged in some business with him, which cannot be transacted in his absence. Oh dear, dear, what can have become of him!"

"When did you see him last?" asked Edward.

"He left a tent, where he slept last night, with these men and myself, at a little distance in the wood—though I can't say we slept much either—where we rested—that won't do either, it was little rest we

had—where we staid, Mein Herr; well, he left this same tent, saying we should see him in the course of ten minutes, but we have never laid eyes on him since.”

Here the man began to deplore bitterly the injury he should sustain from his absence.

Edward having desired, that if they could find him, they would leave word at the hostel, rambled about the fair, in search of him, though powerful as the interests were by which his mind was engaged, he could not withhold some portion of his attention from the fantastic groups which, on every side, met his eye.

He examined the various booths by which he was surrounded, anxious to know which of them belonged to the sorcerer, when he observed one in a distant part of the field, and retired from the rest, the singularity of whose appearance convinced him that it must be that of which he was in search.

Instead of the gaudy colours with which the others were ornamented, it was hung

with black drapery, and a scull and cross bones, formed of white cloth, constituted its only decoration.

Edward asked a peasant, who happened to stand near him, whether it did not belong to the necromancer? and on being answered in the affirmative, desired to know why no one seemed to care to go near it?

"Oh," replied the man, "the magicians don't begin till evening; he's preparing for his business; and people don't much like to go near his place, till they go all together, to have their fortunes told, or to see their wives that are dead, or their wives that are to be, or any other pleasant sight he may choose to shew them; for my own part, I would not go near him, although he was to assure me that I should become an emperor, or shew me the cropped sorrel horse that used to lead my team—aye, or give him back to me again. That cropped sorrel horse was worth a mint in himself, although he was spavined. It would be worth Mein Herr's while to hear

what I have done with him in the course of one week."

Edward, who found he had got hold of another Gasper, devoutly thanked Heaven that he was not under the necessity of listening to the feats of the spavined, cropped, sorrel horse, and civilly declining the communication, passed on, though it was not without some difficulty that he disengaged himself from his former proprietor, who had laid hold of him by one of his buttons, and had already begun his narrative.

He now sought the spot in the wood where he had the night before listened to so strange a tale: the tent was removed, and on searching, he could discover no natural means by which the voice of the sorcerer could have been conveyed into it.

He then visited the pond, having first cut a young poplar, and cleared it from its branches, with which he sounded its depth in every part; it was every where much deeper than the stature of the tallest man; and he felt still more satisfied than he had done before, that no one could

have possibly swam round the pedestal that supported the statue in the centre, with sufficient rapidity to have eluded his observation.

This endeavour to account for the strange occurrences he had witnessed was rather the result of his former sceptical habits, for no habits leave man without a struggle to maintain their ground, than any present hope that they might prove successful, for there were some circumstances, coupled with his belief in the marvellous, that raised in his own eyes his importance in the scale of creation, and had in them other principles of gratification which he could not wish to find fallacious.

## CHAP. XI.

—————By my fay,  
This man shall guide me on my way ;  
Although the great arch-fiend and he  
Had sworn themselves of company.

MARMION.

THE exile now returned to the village at a slow pace, ruminating on the strange and eventful life he was passing ; and now memory rested on the dying smile of the poor Luise, and now an unbidden thought wandered towards the countenance of the lovely minstrel, in which the ruddy hue of health sat, like the welcome light of the friendly beacon, when it flames before the mariner on the darkness of night, and he strains his greedy eye, if rocky promontory, or tufted wood, or village spire, or, haply, mossy roof, that tells of home and shelter, of love and joy, may catch the red effulgence.



As the exile approached the fair green, he was surprised to find the sounds of merriment and industry, which had come fuller upon his ear as he advanced, suddenly cease altogether ; for several seconds a deep silence ensued, and this was followed, not by a return of the former sounds, but by the hoarse murmurs of a crowd, agitated by some unexpected emotion ; again there was silence, and again it was broken in like manner.

The exile, curious to know what was going forward, pushed rapidly through the trees that impeded his view, and as soon as he came within sight of the green, he perceived that the shew-booths, toy-sheds, and refreshment-tents, were all deserted, and the whole crowd had pressed to the verge of the green, from whence they were looking over a paling, towards some object that had attracted their attention ; some pointed, and others seemed to inquire still for the spot to which they were to direct their eye.

Edward had now reached the crowd, and

could hear—"There, where the road issues from that gorge, and winding underneath the cliff, suddenly enters the wood, that sweeps into the valley. I tell you they are the archers from St. Gallen and Appenzel; I know the first by their white banners, which bear an embroidered mitre, though I could not say I could distinguish that at this distance, and the others by their green mantles and scarlet plumes. There's a large body of them; I marvel much what makes them hitherward—but hitherward they must be coming, from the direction in which they march. You will soon see them again, if you keep your eye on those red-tiled houses, interspersed among the trees—the road runs exactly under them, when it rises out of the hollow."

A faint stream of military music now stole upon the ear, and gradually strengthened, till the man who had spoken before again cried—"There—I told you—there they are!" and as he uttered these words, the close-marshalled band poured over the

height, and the sprightly air to which they stepped came in clear mellifluous notes through the light, still atmosphere. Again they were lost amidst the inequalities of the hilly grounds, over which they marched, and the melody seemed to retire from the ear, when suddenly the clangor of a trumpet was heard close by, in the wood, and another body was seen rapidly advancing through the trees, their pikes, bright-brazen helmets, and light corslets, now gleaming in the sun, and now partially concealed by the close interwoven foliage.

The crowd gazed in mute suspense, while they, having cleared the forest, drew up on the green, and immediately proceeded to post themselves round the booth of the sorcerer.

It was soon known that they had orders to convey him, as a prisoner, together with all his effects, to Appenzel. He was drawn forth from his covert, but appeared not in the least dismayed: while the archers were busied assisting his own people in taking down his booth, and packing up his effects,

he looked round upon them with an air of cool contempt, as if he was conscious that their labour was in vain. The exile was prevented from approaching near enough to examine his countenance closely; but having caught his eye, the sorcerer gazed on him for some minutes attentively, from beneath his dark bushy brows; then watching an opportunity, while his guards were busy, wrote with a pencil a few lines in his tablet, tore the leaf, and directed one of his own people to carry it to him. It ran as follows:—

“The men to whom I am a captive will soon be glad to liberate me. No man’s power can harm me, nor for long control me. I read your thoughts; this night you would have consulted me, but for what has happened; and this night you would have had that mystery unravelled which you most wish to develop. But we shall meet again.”

The exile had scarcely read this communication, when the archers, who had been

seen winding through the uplands, poured down from a hill that rose immediately above the village, and joining the other detachment, formed so completely serried a phalanx around the prisoner, that no further glimpse of him could be had.

When all was ready for departure, they moved off in the same direction they had come, the sorcerer still concealed by the numbers and close-marshalled order of his guards.

The exile watched them as they rose from each vale, and wound round the base of the cliffs, the deep clefts of which sometimes, with sudden intonation, swelled the volume of sound emitted by their clarions and recorders, that again, as they passed them, whispered a low, sweet, far-off strain, and then, as they entered a part of the road concealed by coppice, was heard no more. Still the pennons were seen floating above the tops of the underwood, which soon, however, becoming higher, screened these also from the view.

He now turned, chagrined and disap-

pointed, to renew his search for Herman. He soon found his comrade, to whom he had before spoken, but from him he only learned, that after the most diligent search, he had been unable to find him. He continued to ramble about the green till night, avoiding the hostel, lest he might meet Theresa, whose eye he now feared like that of the basilisk.

As he once passed it, at a little distance, he perceived her and her brother on the bench where he had sat with them the preceding night, playing to some rustics who were dancing. She perceived him; but apparently fearful that he might think her too prone to gaze on him, her eye was immediately cast down, and remained fixed on the ground till he passed on.

Fatigued with the watching of the former night, he retired early to rest, with the intention of rising early, and once more pressing the hand, and catching the smile of the minstrel, before he parted from her for ever; it would be a pleasure

to which he was well entitled, since he had voluntarily encompassed it with the thorns of restraint. When he rose, however, it was late, for fatigue had overpowered him, and the wanderers were gone, after having left a message fraught with good-will for their benefactor.

We know not, sometimes, how dear a pleasure is, till we have lost all hope of it. The man whom the world's cruelty has visited with a ruder pressure, yields his bowed spirit to the shock, and longs to be at rest ; while yet the dark passage is contemplated but at a distance, he wonders why it should be deemed unlovely ; and soothed by calm philosophy, refuses to exert that energy of will, without which the earthly part of man crumbles and collapses, like the abandoned palace of some unsceptred monarch ; but oftentimes hath the same hour brought hope to him, and extinguished that of such as loved him ; and when that has germinated but to perish, then again has existence become desirable ; the hardness of his fellows is no more remembered ; every trait of

tender, affectionate sympathy, that should have formed a counterpoise to it, now dearly cherished, makes the approaching struggle terrible; and in the very jaws of death life imbibes a more delicious fragrance; her prospects expand more beautiful than ever, rich with sunshine and verdure, with fountain and grove, and fruit and flower; but in vain—the shades that were invited swim before the sunken eye, and the soul departs in a sigh of fond regret, while the hand of the friend who had counselled resistance to adversity, is pressed in acknowledgment that he had counselled right.

Thus it fared with the exile. He had felt disposed to condemn the single bud he had agreed with his own spirit to pluck, while he was renouncing, beneath the pressure of a sense of duty, the bank rich with the florist's most inestimable treasures that lay full before him; but when the hope even of that slender enjoyment had vanished, then was it valued; *one* glance, *one* smile, *one* wish for his happiness, *one* sigh, *one* struggling tear, *perchance* of expiring



hope, that avowing how well he was fitted to please a maiden's eye, and win her heart, would be painfully pleasant; all this he would now willingly have purchased by the sacrifice of each and every of the possible gratifications that yet might await him in life; this was what he felt, for he did not dare think so; on the contrary, he endeavoured to think that to have missed seeing her was fortunate both for her and himself.

Yet it might be, an intruding and unconscious hope that he might regain what he had lost with interest—that she might return that way as she sought her native land, and that they might pass together the pastoral hills and stream-fed lakes of that happy land in which he had already found the adamant buckler of freedom thrown between him and oppression, that he might scan the texture of one pure mind, shrined in a frame whose loveliness made fascination dwell with goodness—a pleasure new to him, but which nature had well fitted him to relish.

It was perhaps this hope, rather than

the ostensible impulse, however strong that might be, that made him determine on waiting for the rustic who had been in partnership with Herman, for this man had left his goods at the hostel, saying that he would return in a few days, after having searched for his comrade, whether he should be successful or otherwise.

Three days, however, having elapsed without any thing being heard of him, the exile began to think of pursuing his journey.

It was on the evening of the fourth, that having given directions that his steed should be shod, in preparation for the renewal of his pilgrimage on the following morning, he walked into the forest, to meditate amidst its lonely shades. The weather continued fine; the air was warmer than is common in the then season of the year, in countries where cool breezes, descending from the summits of mountains capped with eternal snows, early in autumn possess the lengthening night, and yield with reluctance their reign to the sun, when,

with still-powerful beam, he strikes the earth, and fills all life with gladness.

The exile found himself obliged to shut even the westering ray, amidst the less open glades, where the trees, mingling their higher branches, formed an arcade, the russet sword of which was here and there crossed by a line of vivid light, with edges broken by the breeze-moved foliage.

As pensively he wandered amidst these cool recesses, his thoughts now dwelt on the strange scenes he had witnessed, and the still stranger scenes of which he had heard; and now he reverted to his past existence; what a change had been effected, in a short period, in his habits, his prospects, his feelings! from the lightest minded of the disciples of that lax school of philosophy, which bids us pursue pleasure, leaving it to our taste to discover whether virtue and pleasure are allied, he had been converted to what the world would call a visionary—to one who mourned over mis-spent hours that never could be recalled—

to one who looked to the quiet of the grave with satisfaction, and deferred seeking it only till that dark decree of fate should be accomplished, of which he was to be the willing agent—to one who, while the business of the world was all unheeded around him, held converse with disembodied spirits, and listened to melody, such as is breathed from the choirs of the blest. With the bustle of the tented field, with the smiling salutation and insinuating suggestion of the crowded levee, he had no longer any thing to do. His haunt was the wild wood-walk, or the mountain path beneath the beetling cliff—his business the pursuit of a dark wizard, amidst his nightly wanderings, whose shadowy essence now fled before him, and now stalked around him, while the accents of an awful voice alone confessed his presence.

The transition was passing strange from making the business of life to cheat the hour with some smiling wanton, or snatch the plume of greatness from some brow less wor-

thy of wearing it than his own, to piercing the dark confines of another world, and seeking, even in this, the gloomy and mysterious ways by which divine vengeance was to accomplish retribution. He thought till thought grew painful, for the human spirit cannot long sustain that lofty and awful meditation, that perhaps, when freed from the trammels of corporal wants and infirmities, may occupy a greater space in its enjoyments.

We can gaze for a time, with a high and impetuous delight, that tells of our alliance to a higher nature, on the interminable ocean, heaving its mountain surges, that break, with thundering sound, at the base of those eternal cliffs that have for ages stood their shock unharmed—we can gaze on the ravage of the lightning-fraught tempest, that issuing from its viewless dwelling, scatters terror and confusion over the earth, and rocks to their base her cities, her forests, and her mountains—we can gaze on the red comet, rushing through the infinitude of space, and calculate its

progress, and speculate on the evils its disastrous course may portend to the nations; but soon the ideas expand too widely for our bosom's capacity, and we turn, with oft-removed but never-failing zest, to those minute arrangements of little things, from which little man can never be separated—the providing of the morrow's food, the morrow's fire; or, if they be secured, to the plans which, realized at some future period, may afford us a greater leisure, a more gratified pride, or a sweeter variety of indulgences, when our system shall be perfected, shall be stable as the foundations of Etna, well ordered as the course of those lucid orbs, that, in circles distinct and unconfused, roll round the day-star—that hour, wooed with such anxious diligence, waited for with such exemplary patience, trusted in with such fond credulity, but that never arrives.

Or is there haply some wight of calmer temperament, or who, with keener sagacity, espies the delusive nature of the syren

Hope, and mingles with her spells a resolve to taste the passing moments, such an one can the rich floweret which himself has trained to grace the bosom of the partner of his cares—such an one can the anxious joy of his favourite urchin, as he watches the majestic kite take his just proportions beneath his skilful hands, or the mimic gun receive its small contents—such an one can the kiss that follows, in sweet contrast and gratulation, some tale of hapless love, at any time wrest from the swell of the ocean, the roar of the tempest, or the course of the comet, from imaginings fraught with dark and turbulent delight, from thoughts that soar into the courts of heaven, or fathom the abysses of hell.

So fared it with the exile. He grew weary of the mystery that was too mighty for his thoughts; but to what could *his* fancy turn for a softer green, for a hillock reposing in sunshine or shade, when the scathed column, or field-sweeping torrent, pleased no longer? For him there were

none of the gentler charities of life ; at the moment he had become sensible of their value, he had lost them for ever.

He thought of Luise, and the tear that was now familiar to his eye rolled down his cheek : he thought of his boy—a returning value for life stole quietly into his heart ; the minstrel succeeded ; his mind was prepared to admit her, as the parched soil imbibes the dews of heaven, and the herbage freshens around. Deep, deep, did the gracious image sink into his soul, and the springs of innocent joy, that the world had sullied, and grief had dried, gushed all cool, sweet, and limpid, diffusing health to the wearied spirit.

While a thousand vague and pleasant fancies would intrude, he reached insensibly the spot in the forest where he had found the wanderers seated a few days before. He seated himself upon that part of the bank which Theresa had occupied ; it was sweet to recline against the pollard that had received the pressure of her heart, for she had leaned her side against it, as she



had turned to address her mother, and before he was aware of what he was doing, he had embraced the rugged trunk, and imprinted a thousand kisses on its moss-grown and worm-eaten surface.

Theresa, hadst thou seen that eye fraught with flame, such as never before shot from between its lids—those lips—that hand, trembling with new-found delight—that start and that pause, that seemed to say; “but where may she be found?” Theresa, thou mightest easily have known that, spite of thy dark complexion, thy poor and threadbare garment, thy lowly occupation, the heart that thou didst sigh to possess was thine for ever; thou wouldst have known it, spite of the incredulity that hope and fear beget; but the exile knew it not; and when he thought of waiting longer at the hostel, and if she came not, of seeking her throughout the vine-covered hills and corn-clothed plains of her native land, he thought he was only resolving to guard from other ruder hands the flower which he was resolved should re-

ceive no insult from himself; but still, when he had taken from his pocket the volume of Petrarch which he had found in the chamber of Luise, and the sweet, love-lorn, impassioned strains, to whose melancholy tones the rocks and caverns of Vaucluse had returned their low and querulous murmurs, had melted all his soul, that he thought often of some cottage in some secluded vale, or rock-bound solitude, such as the deepest love or deepest grief would chuse for an asylum from the eye of man, where towering mountains would even exclude the all too-garish ray of the noon-tide sun, and where the shade of vine-matted elms would deepen the privacy.

He tried to complete his picture; he summoned the grey-headed husbandman and the faithful dog, the maiden that might chant over the frothing pail, and the slender flock that might crop the narrow close; the poultry to enliven the farm-yard, and the doves to coo upon the moss-covered roof; but they would not come; there was no one seen but Theresa—there was no

sound in the deep solitude but the sweetness of her evening song—and there was no spectator, no listener, but himself.

He stretched himself upon the bank, letting the hand that held the volume fall negligently by his side, that he might, with that greater relaxation of frame that favours pleasure, more sweetly enjoy the grateful reverie. Insensibly a drowsiness stole upon him; and after two or three fruitless efforts to shake it off, he slept.

His slumber was at first delicious, for it was filled with his day-dreams; but these delightful visions soon changed to others of a very different nature; the fatal manuscript—the pass of Foscari in the bosom of the Appenine—the dreadful death of the murderous Walstein—but chiefly the dark form of the powerful being, who had been made the minister of divine vengeance, swam before his mind in confused and ghastly groupings; then all vanished, and he fancied himself in a dungeon, feebly lighted by a grated window, and reclined on a pallet of straw. He was endeavour-

ing to recollect what circumstances had led him to such an habitation, when he thought the iron door of the cheerless apartment grated on its hinges, and the figure of the sorcerer entering, motioned him not to speak, and advancing to the side of his miserable couch, stood over him in dark and melancholy silence. He was about to address him, and inquire the cause of his presence, when he woke in the effort—the sorcerer was standing by him.

He started up.

A pause of a few moments succeeded; then the sorcerer spoke—"I have not deceived you," said the hollow voice; "and you may now, at an appropriate hour, and in an appropriate place, safe from all *human* interruption, learn that which thou most wishest to know. Have you the courage to meet me to-morrow, at midnight, in the abbey of Marienfels? to works such as thou shalt there be witness of, is that place abandoned. The shrieks of guilty spirits are heard around it—the nightshade

grows ranker within its precincts—the baleful yew, that gives death to the living and shade to the dead, luxuriates around it with fuller development of its deep dun foliage—the howlet broods amidst its decaying cloisters, secure from the intrusion of man—and birds of better omen appear, by their avoidance, to know that it is cursed.”

He paused.

The spirit of the exile felt a degree of awe to which he had been hitherto a stranger; and to this, perhaps, the loneliness of the scene, the hour, for the twilight was now passing from the earth, and the chill of a heavy dew, which had moistened his garments as he slept, contributed.

He hesitated.

“Have you the courage,” repeated the sorcerer, “to hold converse with departed spirits, at such an hour and in such a place? if you have, be there before the bell of a monastery, which lies at some little distance, shall have tolled for the midnight service; fail not; an impenetrable though

unseen guard shall be around thee ; thou shalt behold unhurt, what others, if they have but a glimpse of, close their eyes in temporary death, or madden, if they are not so fortunate, unless reason holds out at the expence of life. Say, wilt thou meet me ?”

“ Mysterious being,” said Edward, solemnly, “ I will meet thee, if necessary : but say, canst thou not now unfold the particulars of that dark transaction, the partial knowledge of which has harrowed my soul ? why must the dead be made to burst the pearments of the grave, to relate that of which thou thyself canst be an informant who may not be disbelieved ? for have I not evidence sufficient that thou canst pierce the womb of futurity—that Heaven makes thee an agent of its vengeance ?”

END OF VOL. III.

---

Printed by J. Darling, Leadenhall-Street, London.

---

# NEW PUBLICATIONS

PRINTED FOR

**A. K. NEWMAN & CO.**

AT THE

*Minerva Press,*

LEADENHALL-STREET, LONDON.

	£	s.	d.
Love, Mystery, and Misery, by A. F. Holstein, 2 vols	0	10	0
The Modern Villa and Ancient Castle, or the Peer and Alderman, by Miss Byron, Author of the English-woman, &c. 3 vols.....	0	15	0
Festival of St. Jago, by the Author of the Private History of the Court of England, 2 vols.....	0	10	0
Arthur Fitz-Albini, 3d edition, 2 vols.....	0	9	0
Louisa, or the Cottage on the Moor, by Mrs. Helme, 7th edition, 2 vols.....	0	10	0
Woman, or Ida of Athens, by Miss Owenson, 4 vols..	1	1	0
Nocturnal Minstrel, or the Spirit of the Wood, by Mrs. Sleath, Author of the Bristol Heiress, Who's the Murderer? &c. 2 vols.....	0	10	0
Castle of Arragon, by Miss Smith, 4 vols.....	1	0	0
The Grey Friar and Black Spirit of the Wye, 2 vols....	0	10	0
Alphonso, or the Natural Son, by Madame Genlis, 3 vols.....	0	15	6
Euphronia, by Mrs. Norris, 3 vols.....	0	15	0
Children of the Abbey, by Maria Regina Roche, Author of the Discarded Son, &c. 6th edition, 4 vols.....	1	0	0
Houses of Osma and Almeria, or the Convent of St. Ildefonso, by the Author of the Children of the Abbey, &c. 3 vols.....	0	18	0
Mysteries of Ferney Castle, 4 vols.....	1	2	0
The Beau Monde, or Scenes in High Life, 3 vols.....	0	15	0
The Bard, by E. Jones.....	0	5	6

7



